



AT CAPRI.

A STORY OF ITALIAN LIFE.

BY CLARA BAUER,
("CARL DETLEF,")

AUTHOR OF "VALENTINE, THE COUNTESS," ETC.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

By MS.

TRANSLATOR OF "VALENTINE, THE COUNTESS," "A TWO-FOLD LIFE," ETC.

35



PHILADELPHIA:
PORTER AND COATES,
No. 822 CHESTNUT STREET.

[1875]

PZ 3
B 32: A

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1875, by
PORTER & COATES,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

MEARS & DUSENBERY,
Electrotypers and Stereotypers.

HENRY B. ASHMEAD.
Printer.

AT CAPRI.

CHAPTER I.

FOR two days a furious storm had cut off all communication between the inhabitants of the island of Capri and the mainland of Italy. The steamer from Naples had not ventured to approach the rugged cliffs of the "Isle of Goats," and travellers were compelled, if they did not wish to return, to disembark at Sorrento and wait for more favorable weather.

To-day a calm had ensued. The sea, which yesterday had heaved in wild surges and dashed madly far over the Marina, as if eager to seize the boats, the cautious fishermen had drawn up on the shore and securely fastened there—for they knew the malice of the contending elements—this sea now lay as calm and peaceful, as if

its sole object were to serve as a huge mirror to reflect the blue sky.

And how intense, how brilliant was its hue! - The blue of the lapis lazuli seemed dull and lifeless beside it. The storm had swept all mists and vapors from the air; the outlines of the coast appeared with wonderful distinctness, a thin light column of smoke rose from Vesuvius and floated over it like a transparent cloud; the white villas of Sorrento gleamed forth amid their groves of orange and citron. Farther away the eye wandered over the gulf of Salerno, the reefs rising from the water to which are given the name of the Siren Islands, the once proud commercial city of Amalfi, which sits on the rocky shore like a dethroned queen, and on the other side the ruins of Pæstum, whose most majestic temple, that of Neptune, glittered on the horizon like a tiny speck.

All this fair scene, bathed in the brightest sunlight, was beheld by a pair of eyes keen and far-sighted enough to need no glasses, eyes which though principally engaged in searching learned folios and deciphering ancient writings—had still preserved the sharpness of the falcon's. The owner of these remarkable organs of vision, which however were not particularly handsome—

they were grayish-blue eyes of no special color, such as one meets at every street corner in Germany—had been about a month at Capri and chosen this spot on account of its magnificent view, as his favorite resort. It was the Punta di Mitromania, which slopes sharply down in jagged cliffs, rude terraces, and primitive steps to the cave which is called by the inhabitants of the island Grotto di Matrimonio, and believed by the dark-eyed girls to possess the magic power of binding in the bonds of matrimony before the lapse of a year every one who dares to enter it.

The path leading to the "Punta" was not wholly free from danger, and required either the capacity for climbing of a goat or the freedom from dizziness of a native of the island. One was obliged to walk close beside the edge of the steep cliff, over rolling stones which yielded under the feet and bounded down into the abyss, and the hand seeking support could only cling to the bushes growing between the clefts of the rock.

But the toil was well repaid, the spot was one of incomparable beauty, a secluded region which seemed formed for quiet dreams, thoughts and labor. Chance had so ordered that no one of the two dozen artists, who had made a summer trip to Capri, had selected the Punta

di Mitromania for the subject of a sketch. They were sitting about everywhere with their camp-chairs and white umbrellas, on the Marina, at the chapel of San Maria del Soccorso, among the ruins of Tiberius's villa, on the Faraglioni, but fortunately they did not mount here, and the owner of the falcon eyes—by his full name and title Professor Walter Erichsen—might fancy that God had prepared a wondrously beautiful study for him alone. An olive tree rooted in a crevice of the rock gave him its shade, and the heat of the sun was moderated by the breeze from the water. He had prepared a compromise between a seat and a couch of a cushion and several shawls, which protected his person from too sharp an impression of the rough rocks. These useful articles, together with a small bottle of Capri wine, a basket in which the padrone of the hotel had packed a lunch of bread, cold meat, and oranges, and finally—last but not least—the various books and writing materials, were carried up each morning to the Punta on the back of a patient donkey, while Walter strolled along on foot and good-naturedly allowed Marietta, the owner of the beast, to ask him if he really had no “sposa” at home, and whether it was true that the sun there—what Marietta

imagined by the term "there" it would have been difficult to discover—only showed itself for a few months?

The artless prattle of the little creature, who was about fifteen years old, and whose clearly cut features unmistakably belonged to the Greek type, affected him like the soft plashing of the waves on the Marina. He heard, answered, and yet continued his own train of thought undisturbed. Marietta paused at a projecting rock, because the donkey could climb no farther up the steep path; she relieved him of his burden, and stepping carelessly with her little bare feet over the sharp stones, carried it to the favorite spot of the "forestiere," who to her secret amazement, was neither an artist nor an Englishman.

After pushing the basket of provisions and the flask of wine into a hollow of the rocks, to shield both from the heat of the sun, she withdrew with a smiling: "Si diverta, Signore," and while returning home accompanied by her long-eared companion, racked her pretty head in trying to discover what pleasure the foreign gentleman could find in sitting alone so many hours reading those thick books. Towards evening she set out again to bring the mysterious volumes and all the rest of the luggage back to the albergo, where Walter lived.

It was already late in the afternoon, in two hours the sun would sink into the sea, and the guests at the hotel would be summoned to dinner.

“Cæli temperies hieme mitis objectu montis, quo sæva ventorum arcentur; æstas in favonium obversa et aperto circum pelago peramœna; prospectabatque pulcherrimum sinum, antequam Vesuvius mons ardescens faciem loci verteret,” read Erichsen, who with his head resting on his arm, had stretched himself out in a half-recumbent posture. He raised his eyes—yes, Capri was still exactly as Tacitus described it: The temperature in winter mild, because the mountains sheltered it from the cold winds; the summer remarkably pleasant, since it had the western breezes and was surrounded by the sea; moreover it had a fine view of the most beautiful of bays, ere the eruption of Vesuvius altered the form of the landscape.

At any rate Tiberius was a man of taste, since he chose this island for his residence. And when we think of marble palaces towering from these rocks, palaces adorned with the masterpieces of Grecian sculptors and artists, we can easily understand how the aged emperor could live here ten years in retirement. The loneliness, the seclusion attracted him; here he was near enough to hold in an iron grasp the haughty Rome, that he

Cæsar

despised, Rome with her two millions of human beings collected from every quarter of the globe—one half the population a luxurious, shameless aristocracy, the other a miserable rabble of slaves—and yet far enough away to enjoy undisturbed repose, since no one was permitted to land on the island without his knowledge.

To-day Walter had envied the unsocial Cæsar his absolute power, as he watched the steamer from Sorrento, which evidently brought a large crowd of travellers. The table d'hôte at the albergo would doubtless show a whole gallery of new, uninteresting faces, which would stare rigidly at every new-comer, and nothing but the harsh unmusical English tongue would be heard during the meal. The young professor always developed a genuine British stiffness, when he wished to ward off annoying intrusiveness; he did not make acquaintances easily, and understood how to protect himself against unwarrantable advances, but he feared an invasion of his favorite retreat, to which he had become so accustomed that he fancied he could not work so well anywhere else. And he had firmly resolved to finish at Capri, the "Latin Studies" for which he had eagerly collected material in Rome. He wished when he recrossed the Alps in July to have the manuscript ready for the printer. He had already

lost a great deal of time, never before had he been so idle. To be sure, this Italian journey was intended to afford him the recreation he so greatly needed. For the first time in his life days had been spent in amusement and sight-seeing, and although they had increased his store of knowledge, his mind had been trained in so stern a school that this kind of study seemed only a pleasure.

Now he had fled to Capri, in order amid the wondrous beauties of nature, which promised to strengthen his excited nerves, unchecked by social considerations, to devote himself exclusively to mental labor. He had made considerable progress in a month, and could be tolerably well satisfied with himself. He succeeded admirably in becoming absorbed in his subject. But frequently intrusive thoughts would come at the most inopportune moments; they were suggested by the cool sea breezes, the fragrance of the orange blossoms, the glittering green lizards that moved with graceful agility over the hot rocks. See! there was one! Walter grasped the dainty creature, but it glided swiftly from under his fingers—lizards are not easily caught, he knew.

He let his head sink on his arm and read on: *Græcos ea tenuisse Capreasque Telebois habitatas fama tradit.*

Certainly! One need only look at the pure profiles, straight noses, and beautifully curved lips of the girls and women of the island, to perceive their Grecian origin. Greeks had colonized Capri, and their blood still flowed in the veins of the present inhabitants—the legend was credible enough. What a difference between these faces and those of the Neapolitans, who bask idly in the sun on Santa Lucia!

It afforded him peculiar pleasure to read again on classic soil the old authors he had translated in his school days! The intrusive thoughts melted away, and Walter again became absorbed in Tacitus.

Any one who had been observing him now—and who knows whether from behind the cliffs two eyes were not peering, that perhaps belonged to a siren who had swum over from one of the opposite islands—would have had ample leisure to scrutinize his exterior. His figure, clad in a comfortable gray summer suit, was of medium height, the firm easy carriage showed no trace of the student, but revealed the strict military discipline to which he had been subjected a short time before. Professor Erichsen, although his thirty-five years released him from the obligation of rendering military service, had voluntarily entered the Franco-Prussian war as an

officer in the Landwehr, distinguished himself in various ways and won the iron cross—his sole decoration, which he wore with modest pride. Most persons, especially ladies, would not have thought his face particularly attractive, nay, would have felt repelled by the expression of sternness caused by the two lines between his eyebrows. But it was a face, whose features bore the impress of conscious manliness and honest sincerity; one could not pass him without thinking: *that* man is thoroughly reliable. The nose projected boldly from beneath a broad forehead, lined with premature wrinkles, over which thick short dark hair bristled somewhat obstinately. Do not waste your smiles and tears, fair child, you will hardly soften *him*, when he has once announced his will. The mouth, on the contrary, possessed almost womanly delicacy and grace, it was a pity that the closely trimmed beard concealed it. The hands, in striking contrast to the bronzed complexion, were remarkably white, beautifully formed, yet very muscular, alike adapted to guide the pen or wield the sword.

Professor Walter Erichsen came from North Germany; he was the only son of an officer's widow in modest, though not needy circumstances; who had imposed the greatest sacrifices upon herself in order to be able to

gratify the boy's ardent desire to study. Walter had endeavored to support himself at the university by giving private lessons and reading proof for publishers, and afterwards found himself compelled to adopt the same means of earning a livelihood, if he did not wish to starve. To give lectures in the day, private instruction to young men preparing for their examination, and at night toil at his writing until dawn—such had been his life for many years.

Reared amid poor, but highly cultured people, he could with difficulty renounce certain refined habits, and made the greatest sacrifices in order always to appear outwardly a gentleman. Small close rooms, coarse linen, shabby clothing were unendurable to him; he made actually superhuman efforts to escape from this oppressive poverty.

Just at this time the great war occurred, and the highly esteemed teacher entered with his pupils the ranks of those who battled for their native land. After peace was concluded he devoted himself with fresh energy to his profession, and soon after one of those lucky chances occurred which so often give a more favorable turn to life, than years of arduous toil. A prince, who had earned glorious laurels as a hero in the war, passed

through the city and wished to examine the interesting collections of the ancient alma mater. The president of the college presented the various professors, that he might choose from their number a cicerone. The stately figure of Erichsen, who, to do honor to the royal commander in whose army corps he had served, wore his uniform, was instantly noticed by the prince, who designated him his guide. The professor's easy manners and fearless frankness, the natural tone in which he showed his thorough knowledge of everything to be explained, greatly pleased the distinguished guest. He conversed constantly with him, delicately inquired about his private circumstances, and asked whether it would not be an advantage to his studies if he could spend some time in Italy?

Walter did not deny that such a journey was the object of his most ardent longing, but his limited means rendered it absolutely impossible.

His affable patron told him as he bade him farewell, that he hoped the university in the capital might be able to secure his fresh intellectual power, and asked if he would be disposed to accept a call thither? "Of course under the most advantageous conditions," laughed the

prince ; “ don’t estimate yourself below your value ! I depend upon seeing you again.”

He must have interceded in behalf of his protégé, for at the end of three months Erichsen was offered a well paid professorship in the capital, while in the accompanying letter the Minister of Public Worship and Instruction informed him that the government had granted him a six months’ leave of absence and a considerable sum of money for the purpose of visiting Italy, and added in a very flattering postscript that science anticipated valuable treasures from the fruits of this sojourn.

So Walter had come to Italy. For the first time he felt free from the gnawing care, which had hitherto upbraided him for every moment not devoted to incessant labor. The sum given for the journey seemed unnecessarily large to one accustomed to deprivations ; true, his salary was by no means equal to that of a clerk in a large banking-house, but it was amply sufficient for his wants. If his pen continued to be industrious, he could establish a comfortable home, affectionately repay his mother for the thousand sacrifices she had made for him.

This was the modest *curriculum vitæ* of Professor Walter Erichsen, who was gazing from the Punta di

Mitromania over the mirror-like sea, and holding eager intercourse with Tacitus, Juvenal, Suetonius and other ancient Romans.

A refreshing breeze bore to the young teacher the fragrance of the wild hyacinths and narcissus flowers blooming amid the rocks, and played with the leaves of the open books. The wind that swept across his brow must have borne on its wings one of those mischievous sprites that whisper foolish thoughts in the ears of men, for Walter's keen eyes gradually grew dreamy as he gazed towards the Siren Isles. That divine hue of the sea! So deep and warm, and yet so difficult to analyze! Was it violet merging into blue, or a dark glowing emerald green?

There were human beings—they were really fairies, elves, nixies, and did not belong to this weary, earthly, prosaic world—whose eyes had that same indescribable color, eyes that mirrored every change of feeling and ran through a whole scale of tints to passionate black.

“When I look at your little feet, I cannot understand how they can support so much beauty!” he murmured.

Strange! Those words were by no means written in his books. At this moment the professor had apparently lost his respect for science, for, stretching himself at full

length, he pushed the precious volumes carelessly aside with his foot, and sighed a sigh that came from the bottom of his heart, a thing members of a faculty are never in the habit of doing. With both hands crossed under his head, he lay gazing absently at the cloudless sky, whose blue gleamed through the gray foliage of the olive trees. How gracefully the delicate oval leaves swayed to and fro——

“When I see your dainty little feet——”

Those delicate little feet with the slender ankles, that glided so saucily about, that enchanting, variable creature, that charming Puck, Cobweb and Mustard Seed in one person! That alluring siren, who bewitched every one at whom she glanced——

Not many would have had strength, like him, to break those magic chains . . . Love! He feared it as a burned child dreads the fire. He had already paid its terrible cost. While still struggling with bitter need, abject poverty, he had cherished a mad passion for a married woman. It was his first love, and seized upon him with the fierce power of a hurricane. The object of this wild love, a dark Southern beauty with large black eyes, had without affection wedded an elderly man, and

possessed one of those dissatisfied natures that are always longing for some extraordinary happiness, and yet can only find it in the routine of every-day life. She returned Walter's love, was happy in his presence, but trembled lest her position in society should be compromised. When he entreated her to break her bonds and become his wife, she recoiled in terror; if he then said he would go away, since this secret, unjustifiable relation was unworthy of a man, she threw herself into his arms, and, with floods of tears, implored him not to leave her to despair.

A sudden death, which in moments of self-torture he accused himself of having caused—she had, while heated by dancing, hurried out into the winter night to entreat his forgiveness for one of the stormy scenes that frequently occurred between them—put an end to this state of affairs. But he had suffered from the after effects for years, his youthful spirits failed, his heart grew old. No more excitements, no more disappointments! was his daily prayer. How many women were there in whom the charm of possession outlasted the first fleeting intoxication? He was forced to confess to himself, that he should not have been happy by the side of the dark-

eyed beauty ; her shallow mind and constant sentimentality would have become uncomfortable and tiresome.

No, no second love ! Perhaps at some future day a sensible marriage—even that must be long considered. To give up his personal independence in exchange for doubtful happiness ! A woman might be lovable and estimable, and yet for instance possess the peculiarity of always interrupting his train of thought at the wrong time ; she might be jealous, irritated by the unavoidable mischances of life. What a chain of incalculable annoyances might be anticipated ! How easily he had packed his luggage for this journey, and how difficult it would have been if he had left a wife and child at home ! Even the regular correspondence a wife had a right to command ! What a tax to be compelled to write a letter, merely that she might not be anxious because she received no news. Divine freedom of the soul, the only thing that consoles us when, as helpless wheels of human machinery, members of a government, freedom of action is rudely curtailed—marriage usually deprives us of you. I will not sacrifice you thoughtlessly !

The young man was so absorbed in his reverie, that he carelessly pushed under his head a highly valued edition

of Suetonius, which he usually treated with the utmost caution, heedless whether the sharp rock tore or defaced the leather binding.

The stern lines between the eyebrows gradually relaxed, the gloomy features assumed a gentler expression, and a faint smile even played around his lips.

CHAPTER II.

TWO weeks after Erichsen first trod the soil of Italy, he arrived in Florence. His travelling companion was a Herr von Linden, who had joined him against his will, but whom he could not shake off. Linden was about the same age, and lived on the interest of a moderate property; as he was entirely unoccupied, he filled his time by performing various little services for his friends. He eagerly executed any commission, was happy if he could procure Frau von A. a companion, or blind Baron B. some one to read aloud; with good-natured amusement he called himself The Gratuitous Employment Office. He could supply every want, knew where genuine Marsala, old laces, and vieux Saxe were to be had, offered to execute the most difficult commissions, and it was only to be regretted that he did not devote to some more valuable purpose one-half the zeal and energy he displayed in these matters. He had heard high praise of the young professor, whose personal acquaintance he made by accident on the railroad. He

liked Erichsen, whose reserved manners inspired him with respect; it was useful and interesting to visit classic scenes with a man of such attainments. In his boundless complaisance, he instantly sketched a plan of obtaining for the young professor, through an aristocratic aunt and uncle, the position of tutor to the Crown Prince. With this generous idea in his brain, he thought himself authorized in claiming the young man's society without any further ceremony.

The incongruous travelling companions had gone to the Pitti Palace. Walter had hitherto had no opportunity to gratify his æsthetic tastes, but experience once more proved to him, that a clear, logically trained mind will instantly recognise what is of real value, even in departments of which it has no knowledge. One stroll through the collections had been sufficient to enable him to distinguish the style of the different masters, and identify them correctly without a catalogue.

He was particularly delighted with Titian's portraits; these men and women in their quiet enjoyment of existence, the proud security of their individuality, embodied to him the golden age, when life and enjoyment of art were the same. One of his favorite pictures was the Magdalen, the beautiful woman with the luxuriant waves

of red gold hair, which with one hand she timidly draws over her bosom.

“Look,” he said to Von Linden, who was criticizing the exquisite outlines, “there is no such hair at the present day, it has even vanished from the home of the Venetian women. I understand why Titian could not represent his most beautiful forms without this wonderful ornament. There is a demoniacal charm that bewilders the senses in these gold and purple reflections, as if the fervor that animated these divine shapes blazed in flames around their heads.”

Von Linden, whose scanty hair bordered upon red, was highly edified by this panegyric, though he did not share Walter's predilection for Titian, probably because instinct told him that these royal women would have cared very little for such a small, thin, fussy man as he. He sought out Rafael's *Madonna del Granduca*, whose chaste purity inspired an elevated, pious mood, muttered in an under tone: “O santissima, O piissima,” and talked of consecrated hours.

Walter was leaning back in a window corner with folded arms, gazing at his favorite picture, when he heard a laugh, a light, gay, mocking laugh, such as is

peculiar to elves, nixies, and such merry folks, who jeer at rude commonplace mortals.

"No, no, grandpapa," said a childish voice, "you mustn't want your breakfast yet, you must sustain yourself for at least half an hour on the masterpieces of art. I shall really be shamed before the courier, who will form a very bad opinion of our culture."

"You are a little tyrant, Andy," replied a masculine voice; "I assure you I can't endure all these Ascensions and Descents from the Cross."

"There is no lack of Venuses and other scantily clad heathenish ladies, whom your degenerate sex usually contemplate with delight," laughed the elf in her silvery tones.

Walter turned. Beside an old gentleman, who had evidently belonged to the army, stood a young girl, whose slender figure, with its perfect symmetry, promised motions of unusual grace. Over her neck and shoulders fell in soft, heavy masses waves of magnificent red gold hair—it had been stolen from Titian's Magdalen! When unbound, it must have covered the little creature like a cloak; what a warm golden light rested on the gleaming braids, the obstinate little curls that clustered round the pink ears! Now she looked back and revealed a delicate,

intellectual face, a complexion which is only found with red hair, pouting scarlet lips and a pair of eyes, that scanned him beneath their long lashes with a lightning-like glance, eyes that sparkled like diamonds and whose color he could not determine.

Walter had never seen a person who possessed such singular charms; everything harmonized perfectly: the simple elegance of the toilette, the easy graceful movements, the gay saucy prattle. She did not appear to notice the glances she received on all sides from the gentlemen, but if any one was too persistent, she repelled him with a look whose hauteur could not be surpassed, and the next instant her face again assumed its expression of childish sauciness.

She now passed tolerably near him, to look at Titian's Magdalen, and clapped her little hands in delight.

"Do be enthusiastic for once, grandpapa!" she impatiently exclaimed, "I should like to know why you came to Italy! The beauties of nature, the wonders of art, win from you at the utmost a gracious nod, a 'very pretty!' I don't understand how you can stand before these things so stupidly; they fill me with ecstasy, and I feel so happy that I would like to throw my arms around your neck, if it were proper."

She shook the old gentleman, whose only reply was a faint smile, as if she expected by the touch to communicate to him the electric current of her own enthusiasm.

"Will you never be quiet and sensible like other people, Andy?" he asked.

"No, never!" she energetically replied, drawing the velvet cap with its heron's plume further over her face; "you ought to be glad that I am an exception to sober, tiresome mortals."

She turned so quickly, that one of her long tresses almost brushed Walter's face, and a keen glance from the, as he thought, emerald green eyes scanned his features.

"You must wait twenty minutes," she laughingly declared, removing her hand from the old man's arm. "I shan't go until one o'clock, then the table may assert its claims."

She had scarcely taken a step, when she exclaimed: "Look there, grandpapa! That is surely the factotum of fashionable society, Herr Von Linden. 'Figaro quà, Figaro là!' The most useful and convenient individual that can be imagined. I thought we should meet him somewhere about here."

At that moment Herr Von Linden rushed up.

“Oh! fair lady,” he cried, panting for breath, as with an expression of the greatest delight he kissed the slender little hand encased in a pearl-gray glove, “how fortunate I am to meet you here! I was told that your Excellency intended to go to Rome”—he shook hands with the General—“and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing you at our ambassador’s, if not before. How is your wife?”

“Grandmamma is tired and therefore did not accompany us, she remained at the hotel with the companion—the same one you recommended; we are very well satisfied with her”—replied the young lady. “We shall arrive in Rome at the beginning or middle of February, for the carnival is tolerably late this year: will you go with us or earlier?”

Walter did not understand his travelling companion’s reply, he was amused at the sight of his radiant face as the good man again bowed deferentially to his charming acquaintance. A few minutes after Herr Von Linden approached him. “Come, Professor,” he whispered in an excited tone, “you must make the acquaintance of the most bewitching woman in the world, Madame la Baronne Andy von Valmont, née von Willberg.”

“Madame? I thought she was a young girl just from boarding-school.”

“You are mistaken,” replied Von Linden; “the little baroness cannot be measured by any ordinary standard, she is thoroughly original; when she is a grandmother she will look like her own granddaughter. She was married eight years, and has been a widow about two. Have you never heard of her? Ah! yes, you have not yet resided any length of time in the capital, or you would surely have known the pet child of society. I was just speaking to her about you, and though she declares she is afraid of your learning, she wants to make your acquaintance. ‘It can do us no harm *de nous froter avec l’esprit*, Herr Von Linden,’ she said, smiling. She is a delicious creature, and always has such comical ideas. Her grandfather is General D. Von Willberg, she has lived in his house ever since she lost her husband—who, between ourselves, was a mummy, dried up soul and body.”

The introduction was made, and the little baroness eyed Walter with a timidity very unusual to her. The general invited the gentlemen to take their seats in his carriage, drive to the hotel, and breakfast with them. The young baroness, who in consequence of her girlish

appearance, was often addressed by the professor as "Fraulein," was in the gayest spirits. She complained bitterly of the tyranny the courier exercised over the whole family; such a person, in her opinion, was a torment and no relief in travelling. Even she who did not usually yield to authority easily, had given up the contest as fruitless, since her grandparents helplessly submitted to all his arrangements.

"If you inquire about my health, I shall really be obliged to reply: Thank you, the courier is very well," she continued with comic indignation, "we live and breathe through him, he considers us his property, we are wedded to him, nay, even worse off, for we dare not think of a divorce. Do you know what a courier is? He is the hostile principle that consistently thwarts your most innocent wishes, and compels you to do what you don't desire. Under the pretext that this or that famous collection or church can only be seen on such a day and hour, he drags you pitilessly in the burning sun or pouring rain to the designated place. He does not hesitate to assert that the mountain he forces you to ascend to-day at a very inconvenient time, might by some convulsion of nature, be swept from the face of the earth to-morrow. You cannot stay at the hotel recommended

by your friends, or make purchases at the shops you have been told are cheap—you inspire me with great respect, Herr Professor, and I feel very insignificant beside you, but you are by no means so majestic a person as our courier. When he says with a superior smile: '*Madame, cela ne vaut pas la peine d'être regardé,*' I don't venture to glance askance at it, and when he condescendingly observes: '*Madame, c'est un chef d'œuvre,*' I fix my eyes convulsively on the masterpiece he patronizes. Besides, I am convinced that he cheats us shamefully."

"Andy exaggerates," said the general, as the gentlemen laughed, "the man is really very well informed and useful; he saves us every inconvenience, and sees that we are served in the best possible manner."

The elf pouted, which gave her a most bewitchingly defiant expression.

"Because we pay two or three times the value of everything, *voilà le secret!* Mr. Silvio irritates my nerves, it makes me uneasy not to be able to discover where his home is, whether he came into the world as a courier with a travelling satchel, or whether he too is bound by any family ties. For instance, I should like to know when he takes his meals. He has no opportunity to

sustain himself with earthly food during the day, for he follows at our heels like a shadow, and only leaves the family intrusted to his care for a few hours of the night. I am going to emancipate myself from this despot," she exclaimed, saucily shaking her curls till they seemed to send off sparks in the sunlight, "I will make these two gentlemen my cavaliers, and leave the walking guide book to my grandparents."

So it happened that Erichsen and Von Linden became the constant attendants of the baroness, whose remarkable beauty attracted admiring eyes wherever they went. Towards Walter she had from the first moment adopted a tone of childish modesty, which formed a flattering contrast to the jeering manner maintained with others.

"I am just clever enough to understand, that you circle like an eagle over us talkative wrens," she once said, "and I am grateful to you for conversing with me as if I were a reasonable creature, unlike other men, who see nothing in me except my face."

What a richly-gifted nature she possessed, and how much might have been made of it with proper guidance! Everything in the little head might be confused, but her wonderful memory always aided her to find the right thing at the right moment. While she laughed and

prattled and with exuberant vivacity ran from one subject to another, she saw and heard everything that was passing around her, grasped each peculiarity of the country, the inhabitants, the customs. She often had not patience to wait for a logical explanation, but guessed whither it was leading, sprang over the intervening steps, and rarely missed the goal. The young professor involuntarily admired the ease with which she ruled all the forms of social intercourse; free from any narrow-minded pride of birth, she felt so secure in her position, that she never gave it a thought. She possessed a peculiar talent for drawing wide boundaries for herself and imposing narrow ones upon others.

Herr von Linden, who wore her colors as a faithful Paladin, confidentially informed Walter, that in the capital the little baroness went by the name of the Salamander, because fire seemed to be her native element, and yet she herself was never burned, nay people doubted whether she had a heart. Walter tried to explain the charm of her nature by the peculiar mixture of womanly independence and girlish, even childish innocence. She often gave utterance to expressions, from which it might be inferred that many relations of life that women usually do not understand, or if they do, prefer to conceal their

knowledge, were not unfamiliar to her, that she had reflected upon them; but it seemed to him that the knowledge was purely abstract. Of her marriage, her former husband, she never spoke, and it was singular that in spite of her vivacity, which often seemed to sweep her away like a whirlwind, she could never be led on to say a word more than she wished.

A week had elapsed in this way; Walter thought he had never so distinctly noted the flight of time, his head was as clear as ever. He knew that the little baroness favored him, because for the moment no more valuable admirer was near her, that she took it as a matter of course that she had bewitched the grave professor, with all his logic. Well, and he watched her as he gazed at the sunlight flickering on a sparkling waterfall; it would as soon have occurred to him to glow with passion for a butterfly, or fall in love with a libella, as to mistake her sport with him for earnest.

Duty obliged him to break off this intercourse; the time allotted to Florence had expired, he was compelled to go to Rome, where the library of the Vatican was to be the scene of his researches. General Von Willberg also wished to go to Rome as soon as possible, but his wife was ill with the fever of the country, and

they were obliged to wait for her recovery before continuing their journey. Andy—Walter thought this original name, which he had never heard before, very pretty, and often called the young widow by it in his thoughts—Andy seemed to deeply regret his departure, and was not at all consoled by Herr von Linden's promise to remain in Florence and act as her cavalier. In the last evening her gay spirits wholly deserted her; she looked earnestly at Erichsen, and her merry witticisms could scarcely struggle through the delicate pouting lips. He took the opportunity to examine the color of those strange changeful eyes, and succeeded in coming to the conclusion that they looked like emeralds when she laughed saucily, and changed to deep blue when moved by emotion; but they always sparkled like stars under the long curling lashes.

The professor did not think of turning to the neglected volumes he had pushed aside; his head still rested on the rare copy of Suetonius, and he gazed at the blue air, in which a graceful elf was soaring, Puck and Mustard Seed in one person.

In Rome, by the aid of deciphering ancient inscriptions and plunging into historical and archæological studies, he had succeeded in partially regaining the disturbed

balance of his mind. He lived more amid the ruins than in the modern city; he was daily to be seen on the Palatine and in the Forum, but very rarely in society. The letters of introduction he had brought had opened the best circles to him; the ambassador of his country, a connoisseur in art and a great admirer of classic antiquity, had cordially invited the young professor to make himself at home in his house and spend his leisure evenings with him. Walter rarely availed himself of the friendly offer, as he generally used the first hours of the night in arranging and writing out his notes.

A February day, which was far more spring-like than the whimsical children of a German April, had lured him out upon the Campagna. Artists might care nothing for the flowers that decked it, since they supplanted the golden hue that harmonizes so wonderfully with the ruins, but he rejoiced at the sight of the countless anemones, violets, daisies, and crocuses that sprang up in every direction. The Via Appia cuts the wide plain in a straight line and crosses the Alban Hills like a white ribbon. He had wandered along it for some distance, pausing at the most interesting of the ruined monuments on the right and left, until he reached the Casale Rotondo, a wretched inn built on a tomb. He approached

it ; a pallid woman, who carried an incredibly dirty child in her arms, while five or six others, equally sick and dirty, clung to her ragged skirt, opened the gate and showed the way to the little grove of olives, which has taken root in the old Roman cemetery, and from whence a most charming view may be obtained.

Walter stood still a long time, absorbed in gazing at the incomparable scene. The Alban Hills were so near, that it seemed as if he could touch them ; the cities, villages, and villas rested on the dark-blue background, like a white lustrous necklace of pearls. The jagged cliffs and ravines of the Sabine Mountains were distinctly visible, and all around lay the silent Campagna, to which the ruined arches of the gigantic aqueduct lent an air of solemn majesty. Such dreariness and desolation at the very gates of a great capital ! Such sterile barrenness, where once extended magnificent villas, blooming gardens, fruitful fields ! Never had the melancholy conviction of the transitoriness of all human works been more strongly impressed upon him. Why should we strive and deny ourselves, when each individual was but an atom in the great stream that swept nations away on its waves ? Was it wiser to win as much enjoyment as possible from our short span of days——

He did not notice how the majestic solitude suddenly began to be filled with modern life. The aristocratic foreign society of Rome had streamed from its gates to attend one of the weekly fox-hunts, at which, as was asserted, the hunted animal was never slain,—“*la volpe non fu presa*,” as the newspapers invariably reported. Carriages stopped on the Appian Way, that those who did not follow the chase might watch its course from a distance. Over the swelling ground of the Campagna, a spot so dear to the heart of a bold rider, dashed a numerous cavalcade, ladies and gentlemen in motley confusion. They seemed like a swarm of ants beside the proud ruined arches, that looked compassionately down on the pigmy race. The hunt passed near the Casale Rotondo; the tortured fox had turned thither; an eager zeal animated the merry throng, who dashed forward amid shouts and laughter.

Just at that moment a lady moved aside from the group, checked her horse, and raising herself a little in the stirrup, gazed intently at the solitary figure standing under the olive trees. A blow of the whip urged her steed to the utmost speed, so that the groom could scarcely follow her; she swept easily over the uneven ground, the wind swelled her blue habit like a sail, her

veil fluttered, her red gold hair floated around the little face, whose dazzling fairness bade defiance even to this burning sun. The lithe graceful figure swept forward like a bird, while the little hand grasped the bridle with nervous strength. Walter recognised her, waved his hat, and hurried down the steep slippery path the horse could not ascend. She was there, she sought him, she left the brilliant crowd for his sake—where were his most sensible resolutions? He reached the bottom of the hill at the moment she arrived; an exclamation of pleasure fell upon his ear; she checked the horse so suddenly, that it reared almost as straight as an arrow. Before the groom could hurry up to aid her to dismount, she saucily exclaimed: "Catch me, Herr Professor;" and with a sudden movement threw herself from the saddle into his arms—his arms, that for one moment clasped her closely to his heart. She was a little imp, a bewitching little imp! She was glowing like fire from the wild ride, the scarlet lips were half parted and trembled with her rapid breathing, her eyes sparkled with delight.

"Let me get my breath!" she gasped, leaning on his shoulder and shaking her golden mane back from her forehead. "Faithless friend! I have been in the same city with you a whole week, and you never troubled

yourself about me! I sent Herr Von Linden on your track, as if he were a detective—in vain! He declared you had gone away. Haven't you missed me at all? You are looking pale from study, because a certain little lady has not brought confusion into your learned occupations!"

And as she uttered all this in her clear voice, her mischievous manner, she had clasped her hands over his arm and raised her nixie eyes to his face.

He apologized as best he could: he had been several days in Albano, and did not suppose she had arrived in Rome——

Meantime Baroness Von Valmont's escort had approached, a handsome, faultlessly dressed Englishman, with an aristocratic, expressionless face.

"Oh! Sir Francis," said Andy carelessly, "pray go back to the hunt without me. I am tired—this riding across country is too fatiguing for me. Professor Erichsen, whose name, as a friend of science, cannot be unknown to you, will be kind enough to accompany me home."

Sir Francis, with no very friendly expression, raised his hat to Walter, and with a low bow to the whimsical lady, dashed away. A perfect gentleman, he recognised

every lady's right to act according to her pleasure, and would never have permitted himself to criticize her conduct. Walter was somewhat perplexed by this sovereign independence.

"You ought not to have sent him away, Baroness," he said gravely.

"Why not? He bored me enough in Florence; I am glad to get rid of him. Don't be a pedant, Herr Professor; I am so glad to have discovered you. Do you know that all men seem empty-headed, when I compare them with you? Believe me, I often feel vexed because I only creep about on the surface of life, and long for a firm hand, which will guide me to its depths—but I am too old to change, my talents are wasted!" While uttering these words, she had seated herself on a stone, unheeding her blue velvet riding-habit, and contracted her delicate eyebrows in an expression of grave meditation. "It is delightful to be alone upon the Campagna, let the sun shine upon one, and watch the nimble little lizards gliding to and fro . . . Tell me how it used to look here—I will try hard to understand you!" She supported her head on both hands, so that the red gold waves of hair almost concealed her charming little face, and a strange dreamy sensation stole over Walter, as he

sat beside the charming elf, surrounded by the majestic ruins of the greatest empire the world has ever known.

By the power of his words, he made the crumbling aqueduct once more stand uninjured before her and bear water from the mountains to insatiable Rome; led her in fancy through palaces and baths adorned with lavish luxury, and showed her the corruption gnawing at the root while the branches of the tree still cast majestic shadows over the whole earth.

“It must be delightful to look through the present as if it were only a thin mist and discern the past,” she said thoughtfully, “very much like the tales of the Sunday children, who perceive through the sides of the mountains the veins of precious ore within . . . If I had had a teacher like you, I should have been more sensible——”

Then, with a grave gentle earnestness, as if speaking to a child, he had told her that it was not yet too late; she need only cease to squander her rich talents in passing amusements; honest efforts, accompanied by judicious reading, would accomplish much.

Reading! She started up and put both hands over her ears.

“Don’t speak of it !” she exclaimed with comic horror. “I have a natural aversion to thick scientific books. I can’t hold out to read the first chapter.”

And taking the velvet habit over her arm, she glided away in her little top-boots like a will o’ the wisp.

“You can’t imagine what a lazy child I was,” she continued laughing. “I almost teased my governesses to death—that is,” she added in a repentant tone, “I was really sorry for it at heart, if they only wouldn’t have tormented me with grammar, history, and geography—just think, until a short time ago I didn’t know whether Dublin was in Ireland or England—we should have got along together well enough. Six music teachers tried their different methods on me, the seventh ran away in the middle of a lesson in sheer despair ; in his excitement he even forgot his hat, so I politely followed him into the street, and with a curtsy handed it to him. He furiously snatched it from my hand, called me a regular little imp, and was seen no more. He wrote to grand-papa, that a non-commissioned officer with a whip would be the only fit teacher for me, a remark which made grandmamma highly indignant.

As she saucily shook back her curls, and with the drollest gestures acknowledged her sins, she who a few

minutes before had been listening to his words with an expression of the most profound thoughtfulness, she was really a most incomprehensible creature, entirely unlike the ideas he had previously formed of a charming woman, and yet inexpressibly bewitching and alluring.

Andy had ordered her groom to give his horse to the professor, so they slowly rode back along the Appian Way to the city. The sun was setting, and the weather-beaten rocks glittered in its last rays; the white houses on the blue mountains glowed in the crimson light; the old wall of Aurelian gleamed as if transfigured. When, as they dashed swiftly forward, Andy bent toward him to point out this or that object, her silken hair often brushed his cheek, and once a long tress even caught on the button of his coat, and it cost him a great deal of trouble to carefully disentangle it.

Days followed each other and merged into weeks. Walter was a daily visitor at the house occupied by Andy's grandparents; the general liked him, and always called him Herr Lieutenant, because this title, even if it had only been borne in the Landwehr, was in his opinion far higher than that of professor; he saw the young widow admired wherever she appeared, flitting from one pleasure to another, while her eyes ever sought him.

Did she love him? And if she did—what would be the result? She did not suit his life, she who had a myriad wants, who was accustomed to the refined luxury of wealth, who had no idea of the value of money. True, she assured him that she really possessed a contented disposition and could easily accommodate herself to modest circumstances; but for instance she could not understand why he did not fit up his study, about which he was corresponding with his mother, with leather hangings and antique massive walnut furniture. When he gravely replied that such things were too expensive for his means, she looked at him in astonishment and replied, it would only be the first outlay and he would have something solid and elegant.

His income was ample for a wife of simple tastes—but surely not for Andy, who could not use a hired carriage, and stigmatized a toilette as being very much out of taste if the hat, gloves, boots, and sunshade did not match the color of the dress.

CHAPTER III.

HERR VON LINDEN, who was always the bond-slave of the little baroness, and like a well-trained poodle stood ready to fetch and carry anything, often expressed himself to Walter as if he were very doubtful in regard to the financial condition of the Von Willberg family. He was convinced that they spent more than their income, for they were by no means wealthy. The general, it is true, in addition to his pension, received considerable revenues from family estates, which however would fall to male heirs at his death. As for the star, the jewel of the house, the divine Baroness von Valmont, no one knew what her late husband had left her. To judge from her lavish expenditure, she must have considerable means at her disposal; but perhaps everything came from the old gentleman, who could refuse her nothing. However that might be, some wealthy nobleman would undoubtedly be found, who would wish to appropriate the costly toy.

Yes, only such a person could possess the elf: hard-working mortals were only permitted to dream of her.

Erichsen had already too long allowed himself to be bewitched by the little siren. There was still time; he was not yet too much entangled in the net of her golden hair—he could still release himself without dealing his heart a cureless wound. So he made arrangements to go to Naples; he would remain there several days and then proceed to Capri, where he could find the stillness and solitude his work required. He had not the courage to acknowledge his intention until the moment he took leave of Andy. He feared the beseeching eyes, he saw the little hands clasped imploringly, heard the sweet voice entreating him to stay.

The hour he secretly dreaded approached. Before going to her house, he went to the Pincio, in order from its summit to take a last view of the Eternal City. The constant bustle of the throng moving to and fro seemed to him to-day even greater than usual. Suddenly Herr Von Linden rushed towards him in such haste, that he nearly knocked Walter down.

“Is it you, Professor! Pray tell me, were you a witness, did you see it?” he breathlessly inquired.

Walter in astonishment asked the cause of his excitement.

“So you came too late also. Well, that is some conso-

tion. Just think—it sounds incredible, and yet a thousand eyes saw it, and at this moment the baroness's name is in every mouth!"

"Are you speaking of the Baroness Von Valmont?" asked Erichsen hastily, becoming excited in his turn.

Von Linden nodded, and wiped the perspiration from his brow.

"Listen—about an hour ago the horses attached to a duke's carriage became frightened and dashed wildly through the dense throng of equipages, which moved to and fro in the narrow space——"

"Good Heavens! Andy was not in it?" cried the professor in horror.

"No; but imagine the terrible confusion: the coachmen were busy in endeavoring to control their own unruly animals, in order to avoid some terrible accident, which seemed inevitable in the crowd; the gentlemen were assisting them, the ladies shrieking and crying. The furious horses dashed toward the Villa Medici with the carriage, which was fortunately empty. The pedestrians rushed in every direction to seek for safety—when suddenly a little two-year-old child, whom the unprincipled nurse had carelessly left, appeared in the middle of the street—a cry of horror burst from the throng, who

stood as if paralyzed awaiting the terrible result; men and women had lost all presence of mind—do you know,” interposed Von Linden, pausing to take breath, while Walter listened in mortal anxiety—“such a thing could not happen with us—our men have more iron in their blood and don’t allow themselves to be bewildered—at this moment a light figure sprang forward with the speed of an arrow and snatched the unconscious child, when scarcely an inch from the furious horses. The team, probably startled by the dress fluttering close before them, sprang back, the so-called men came to their senses and brought them to a stand—the heroine was——”

“Andy!” cried Walter—“Baroness Von Valmont,” he added, correcting himself.

Von Linden continued: “You have no idea of the excitement. The child’s mother, an English lady, who came up when all was over, and only heard of the incident when her little fair-haired darling was brought to her uninjured, behaved like a maniac in her delight. Amid floods of tears, she kissed the hands, the dress of the little baroness, and the latter could scarcely escape from her caresses. An attaché of the British legation just told me that it had been decided to give the baro-

ness an ovation; only they had not agreed upon the precise form; probably a deputation will be sent to give her a formal vote of thanks in the name of all the English residents, after which she will receive a serenade or something of the kind. I should never have expected such a deed of heroic daring from the dainty little creature. Her presence of mind, courage and skill—do you know, Professor, she is a woman to rave over!"

With these words he darted off, leaving Erichsen in a conflict of feeling which it would be difficult to describe. She had done this act, was capable of it! She had risked her own life to save that of a stranger! A shudder ran through his frame as he thought that the venture might have failed; he imagined the beautiful form crushed under the hoofs of the furious horses, and the long golden tresses trailed in the dust of the streets. And he had not been at her side to protect her! He could have held her back and done the deed himself; he would not have been paralyzed by nervous terror, like the elegant dainty gentlemen, the habitués of the Pincio.

An irresistible power drew him towards her—never before had he loved her so tenderly, his elfin child, his mischievous Puck! But he must be calmer ere he ven-

tured to look into those dangerous eyes ; it was madness to suppose that this woman would return his love, would belong to him ; and he felt no calling for the vocation of a troubadour, who devotes his life to self-sacrificing admiration of the mistress he adores. His nature was too strong for that ; besides, his situation would not suffer him to waste the elasticity of his mind in perpetual struggles with a hopeless passion. He must keep his head clear, he must—he clenched his teeth—and he would !

Meantime he had reached her house. An almost endless line of carriages filled the whole street. The porter, with a very important air, told him that the most aristocratic personages in Roman and foreign society were calling upon the baroness, but she would receive no one, as she felt very much fatigued, so they merely left their cards. Flowers had been sent in such quantities, that they did not know where to put them. At that moment, as if to confirm the porter's words, an ornament of flowers arranged in the inimitable Roman fashion was brought up ; the lower portion, composed of violets from the lightest to the darkest shades, served as a vase for a magnificent bouquet of roses and lilies of the valley. The bearer of this was followed by two footmen, who

carried a huge bouquet, which displayed the English coat of arms formed of a mosaic of flowers.

Walter was strangely embarrassed; amid these countless tokens of homage proffered to Andy he seemed farther removed from her than ever. He did not suffer from any faint-hearted modesty, on the contrary he had a very strong consciousness of his own merit; yet the world of luxury which here opened before him oppressed him with a half-angry confusion. It was undeniably better to drive in an elegant phaeton than to go modestly on foot; even if these external advantages did not increase a man's true value, they certainly did not lessen it, and if the beautiful exterior suited the noble contents, they formed an irresistibly charming whole. He was tempted to envy the ——— ambassador, whom he met in the vestibule; he knew him to possess a blameless character and thorough education, moreover he had distinguished himself in the last war, proved his capacity in every position in which he had been placed, and besides had a knightly bearing and was an elegant cavalier with the most affable manners, possessing neither pride nor prejudice. He greeted Erichsen in the most cordial manner, for he cherished the highest respect for all laborers in the domain of intellect.

"I did not see the baroness," he said, pressing Walter's hand; "you will doubtless be more fortunate, as you are an intimate friend of the family. I am proud of my charming countrywoman. I have already heard that she is a most daring rider—no hedge is too high, no ditch too wide—but she has now done something of which the bravest man might boast . . . Tell her how greatly I admire and honor her."

Walter looked at the distinguished gentleman in his simple elegant costume, with the ribbons of various orders in his button-hole, and then glanced down at his own dark travelling suit, which his mother had considered the very beau-ideal of elegance—why had he become faithless to his resolution, never to enter the society of those with whom externally he was not on equal terms? Andy, whose door had been closed to Colonel Von S., would of course refuse to see him also. However, it was only courteous to send his card to her grandparents.

The old general was pacing up and down the drawing-room, smoking a short pipe.

"Isn't she the greatest mad-cap that ever lived!" he exclaimed, turning to the professor. "The excitement and gossip about the matter are very disagreeable to me;

the whole story will be in all the newspapers; Andy's name and ours in the largest of type! And it can't be avoided . . . this confounded freedom of the press! She was always just so; when a child she once put half the city in an uproar, by climbing on the roof of a three-story building to release her cat, which had caught one of its paws in the gutter . . . My wife is sick in bed, she has had such a fright; believe me, Herr Lieutenant, it is easier to command a whole regiment, than two ladies. No discipline, I won't speak of punctuality . . . I don't know whether Andy will see you, she has retired to her room."

"Let the professor come in, grandpapa," cried the clear silvery voice, whose tones to-day exerted an even stronger electric influence over Walter than usual.

"Go in, Herr Lieutenant. I am really very sorry that you will leave for Naples to-morrow; my granddaughter enjoys talking with you, and as she has a great respect for your opinions, often listens to your advice. We, my wife and I, have never been able to manage her; she was too pretty a little creature for us to exercise the necessary strictness; she understood how to beg so irresistibly, that a man must have been made of iron to remain steadfast. Then, when we yielded, she laughed and cried

triumphantly: 'I have got my own way!' True, she afterwards found a person who was not to be twisted around her finger, but it made no difference, she only became more defiant and obstinate. However, that is of no consequence now. Go in, Herr Lieutenant."

The professor entered the little baroness's room. Everywhere, on tables, chests of drawers, window-sills, and mantel-pieces, stood bouquets of the costliest flowers. Andy was lying on a couch which was drawn close to the fire; outside the air was soft and spring-like, but Roman houses are always chilly. Andy's charming face was pale, but the scarlet hue of the lips only seemed the deeper. She had exchanged her street toilette for a white cashmere morning dress, fastened with blue satin buttons and confined around the slender waist by a thick blue silk cord; tiny silver embroidered slippers peeped forth under the hem, and her unbound hair fell in golden waves over the cushions. The firelight played on the delicate cheeks, and the nixie eyes gleamed with a mysterious lustre. So beautiful, so bewildering he had never seen her. She held out her hand.

"Come nearer, there is an arm-chair for you, rather low it is true, but it is only proper for gentlemen to sit at ladies' feet. There, now don't put on a solemn face,

I beg of you; there is plenty of formality and ceremony in store for me. Just think, I am to have a deputation of Englishmen wait upon me! it will seem as if I were a great statesman about to receive a diploma or an address. Oh! I never thought of it before, perhaps I shall have the title of doctor conferred upon me. I have often read of such distinctions in the newspapers—how comical if I should become your colleague, Herr Professor!" She laughed, the same mocking elfin laugh.

"You look so grave, are you displeased with me?" she asked.

"I have no right to be so," he answered somewhat stiffly; "but why do you wish to prevent a friend—I suppose I may give myself that name—from saying to you, you have done a great and noble deed?"

"What have I done?" she murmured, lowering her long lashes and playing in an embarrassed manner with the silk cord around her waist. "I was the only person who did not lose all presence of mind—*voilà tout*."

"And you risked your life?"

"Because it is of very little value," she answered quickly.

"Andy!" he exclaimed in a tone of almost stern re-

proof. The name escaped his lips involuntarily—fortunately she did not seem to have noticed it.

“Why yes, I will not recall the words, whether you like them or not! As the helpless child, a sweet, rosy baby, stood there with its little mouth quivering piteously, not that it feared certain death, but merely because it found itself alone and missed its nurse, and the furious horses dashed forward—the thought suddenly darted through my mind, what unutterable anguish it would cause if this bud were crushed, with what despair the wretched mother would throw herself upon the little unrecognisable body. And I thought too, that I was necessary to no one’s happiness. My kind grandparents would deeply regret the loss of their plaything, but I am not indispensable to them, and often even a torment; they have done without me admirably for years, and old people rarely feel passionate grief. I should either succeed in saving the child, or everything would be over for me—true, life when it is gay and brilliant, usually suits me very well, but at that moment it seemed—mine of course I mean—so worthless, that it would be no sacrifice to relinquish. So I sprang forward—besides, I could confidently expect that my fluttering burnous would frighten the horses. It was far more difficult to keep

back the crowd, who wanted to carry me on their shoulders across the Pincio to my carriage."

"You can twist the matter as you choose, but you won't succeed in dwarfing your generous nature."

"No, no," she eagerly replied, half rising from the couch and pushing back the heavy masses of hair, "nothing of the sort! I always obey the first impulse that moves me. I felt just as I do in hunting, when about to take a very high leap, that may break my neck. But the sight of the little child stretching out its tiny hands beseechingly, touched my inmost heart. A baby that could scarcely stand alone," she added, as if in apology.

"You are really so superior to other people, madame, that you need not seek to surpass ordinary mortals in modesty also."

"I admit that few women would have done the act, but I deserve no credit for it. I have never yet lost my presence of mind on any occasion; my head always becomes clearer and calmer the more imminent the danger: the talent is innate, not acquired. Only I don't wish to seem better than I am; if I am to be misjudged at all, I prefer people should think me worse. The latter lowers me in the estimation of others, the former in my own, and my own opinion is most valuable to me.

Let us say no more about it! If your friendship has grown a few degrees warmer in consequence of this hour, I shall consider the accident a very fortunate one. Do you happen to be ignorant, sir, what a high place in my favor you occupy?"

The sparkling eyes gazed at him inquiringly.

"Your whimsical majesty certainly chooses to distinguish me," he answered gaily; but the jesting tone cost him a painful effort.

"Why whimsical? Have I ever showed myself so to you?" she asked eagerly.

"No; you had compassion on the dry bookworm, and thought a ray of sunlight would cheer his life."

"And so you think yourself justified in being pitiless?" Her voice had lost its clear, ringing tones, and sounded muffled.

"Oh! Baroness, that would be as if a beggar turned his back upon a king. No, I only wished to thank you for this sympathy—for your friendship, if you like that word better."

"That is usually only done when one is about to say farewell, or stands on the verge of committing an act of ingratitude. I distrust those who thank me; it is a preparation for a breach of friendship."

“That is a very acute remark,” he answered, fixing his eyes on the floor, that he might not see the charming face; “but I am at present in the former case, that is, about to say farewell.”

“What, you will—you can go now!” she exclaimed, opening her beautiful eyes in astonishment.

How the sweet voice, trembling with suppressed emotion, pierced his heart! But he remained firm.

“Unfortunately I must, madame,” he said quietly. “I am not here to enjoy myself, but to make the best possible use of my stay in the cause of science. Rome offers too much to distract my attention, and like the weak man I am, I have allowed myself to be drawn into society. Pleasure and work are difficult to unite, and I shall therefore fly from temptation to a quiet island, where nothing will divert me from my purpose.”

Andy looked at him incredulously—how could he have the courage to leave her! “You must not go,” she exclaimed, energetically shaking the little head, that could scarcely support the weight of heavy hair. “I will not give you leave. You need rest; did you not tell me yourself that your overstrained nerves absolutely required relaxation? Those horrid lines”—she passed her white hand lightly over his forehead, “have again appeared between

your eyebrows." Then as he made a resolute gesture of refusal, she continued beseechingly: "Stay, for my sake! I shall feel so lonely, so desolate without you, nothing will give me any pleasure. You explain and point out everything in so interesting a manner, that I discover a liking for scientific matters, I know not how. I believe you exert a good influence over me, I should not like to lose you—do not leave me—Walter!"

Oh the siren! If he had been bound to a mast, instead of sitting so near her, that he could touch her dress, inhale the perfume from her hair. He must surely seem like an insufferable pedant—it was the rôle he always filled in the elf's presence!

"It cannot be, madame," he answered almost rudely, "I have obtained what I wanted in Rome; my notes and abstracts are made, and I must prepare to work them out. I should be unworthy of the favor that has been shown me, in supplying the means for this journey, if I carelessly wasted my time."

"Why cannot you work here?" exclaimed Andy, in the tone of a spoiled child. "You need only keep away from the few houses you frequent. If any one should feel hurt, I will tell the cause of this apparent incivility."

You can't spend the whole day at your desk, so come to us in the evening, the morning, whenever you choose. I will see that you meet no one; when you are here, I shall refuse to admit any one else."

Little goose! The eyes, before which her figure floated, could scarcely be fixed with full attention on Latin and Greek excerpts.

"Your kindness moves me deeply, Baroness," he said, secretly summoning up all his courage; "you wish to assure me that I have obtained a firm place in your friendship. To-morrow, day after to-morrow perhaps, you will miss the grave, dull professor, whom you have favored for the sake of contrast, just as, a short time ago, you declared that you like nothing to eat so well as black bread. Not only the stomach, but the soul sometimes grows weary of sweets and longs for plainer food. I was the piece of black bread, which for any length of time you would find indigestible."

"Walter!" Her lips quivered, her eyes filled with tears, and she suddenly burst into sobs; she wept, wept passionately, so that her whole frame trembled with emotion.

How it happened would be difficult to tell—he had no recollection concerning it—but he clasped her in his

arms, her head rested on his breast, her tresses floated over him, he saw the scarlet lips, between which the white teeth glittered, close before him . . . he was a man and no saint, hot blood flowed in his veins, his senses were not yet dulled—how could he clasp the most charming woman in the world and not have his brain a little turned? A fiery stream poured from the golden hair over his heart, he felt the yielding, pliant figure cling closer to him, bent towards the pouting scarlet lips, and pressed passionate kisses upon them.

How long he continued this occupation, he could never remember, he only knew that amid his caresses he had murmured: Andy, sweet little Andy, nixie, elf, Puck, and various similar nonsense, to which her only reply was a happy smile. Then she had gently released herself and wiped away with her tresses the drops still hanging on her long lashes. Her bright eyes looked as blue as corn flowers; she leaned back on the couch and curled herself up like a coquettish little kitten.

“Now you will not go to Capri,” she cried with a triumphant smile, laying her hand lightly on his arm. The intoxication of the moment still bewildered his senses, he had not yet regained his usual self-command,

his lips were still glowing with her kisses and the world floated before him in a golden haze.

“Will you be my wife, Andy?” he asked, bending over her.

Her delicate eyebrows contracted. “Do not talk of marriage—I hate the word ‘Why must two people, who love each other, want to make slaves of themselves?’”

He did not heed the answer. “Will you be my wife, Andy?” he repeated. The intoxication was beginning to vanish and the veil to grow thinner. “My wife? That means will you enter my life, not I yours, bring nothing but yourself, and leave your past behind you? I despise those men, who make the possession of a woman the basis of their existence. I could not breathe in a house, which I had not established and did not support. It must always be the husband’s part to give, the wife’s to receive—no man who has any strong feeling of independence can think otherwise.”

Andy had averted her head and drawn her long tresses over her face. “Be good, Walter, and don’t torment me with such grave questions. I don’t know what I want, I only know that I love you and feel a repugnance to marriage. Must we, even in this divine country, follow the old beaten track?”

"If it is that of custom—certainly, Andy," he answered resolutely. "True you seem to belong to fairy-land, yet the laws of this world constrain you also, and there is a clever little head on this childish body—as I have learned often enough. What reply will you make me?"

"Give me the lilies of the valley on yonder table."

He did so, although a half angry impatience was already taking possession of him.

Andy buried her face in the bouquet, and eagerly inhaled its sweet fragrance, then pressed the damp cool flowers against her cheek. "I will give you my answer in a few days," she said with a curl of the haughty upper lip.

"I shall have left Rome to-morrow before you are awake."

"How cruel! Could you really leave me?" she exclaimed. "I prophesy that you will be very peevish without me. People will seem tiresome, you will find women ugly and men stupid. You will miss the saucy, tormenting sprite, that keeps your majestic self in healthy excitement, and plucks at your dignity till it begins to totter."

"I suppose it will be so, Andy," he answered gravely, "and yet——"

"Yet you must be silent and obey me." She bent forward and gently pressed her white hand on his lips.

He kissed the rosy fingers one after another, but gently pushed the dangerous siren away. His head had become perfectly clear and his eyes were as keen as ever. "So you say—no?" he asked.

"I have said nothing," she pouted; "only to-day, just this once yield to my wishes, dear Walter;"—the tone was as gentle and caressing as a kiss—"stay in Rome a few weeks longer, that we may see the carnival together."

Could she really put forth such foolish pleas? Ah! and she was such a bewitching little creature! He seized his hat and gloves. "Farewell, Andy! I am Bottom the weaver, and Titania rubs her eyes in amazement." He dropped the hand upon which he had pressed his lips.

"Walter!"

He would not hear, pleading as was the tone.

"So you are to leave in the early train to-morrow, Herr Lieutenant," said the old general, who had just come out of the dining-room. "I am very sorry, we shall all miss you. Your acquaintance has afforded me great pleasure. Heaven be praised, you are no stiff,

dried up savant, and I prize the iron cross you wear far above any new philosophical system. We shall probably next meet again in our native country, for I do not intend to go to Naples but proceed to Nice and from there to the Italian lakes, to enjoy the beauties of nature a few weeks."

CHAPTER IV.

WALTER had come to Capri, taken lodgings at the albergo, and wandered daily to the Punta di Mitromania, where he was at this moment lying on his back and conjuring up the events of the past few weeks. The leaves of the olive trees waved in the breeze that came from the sea, the lizards glided from crevice to crevice in the cliffs, the waves of the blue Mediterranean rolled with a monotonous splash against the rocky walls of Capri . . . "The ancients were wiser than we in this respect—they did not torment themselves with feelings," murmured the professor, "what laughter would have been aroused by the sorrows of Werther and Heine:—

"Seit dieser Stunde verzehrt sich mein Leib,
Die Seele stirbt vor Sehnen,
Mich hat das unglucksel'ge Weib
Vergiftet mit ihren Thränen!"

would have been far more incomprehensible to them than the most mysterious sayings of Lycophron. Cham-

fort declares love to be merely *l'échange de deux fantaisies et le contact de deux épidermes*. Our most eminent thinkers, even those who deride and deny it, have earnestly occupied themselves in investigating its nature. Yet a thing that can be so dissected and dismembered, must have an existence. The coldest philosopher, after having analyzed it physiologically and metaphysically, at last confesses that he has not advanced one hair's breadth nearer to the real germ of this mysterious feeling. So love exists; it is a power upon which we must calculate; but a man of character ought not to allow himself to be subjugated by it, if he recognizes it as an obstacle in his plan of life. We should steel ourselves against it. And so it shall be."

A smile played around the young professor's delicate lips, which formed so striking a contrast to the energetic chin and broad, massive forehead. He had conquered his rebellious heart and bewildered senses; he had closed the wound with his fingers, and now it was almost healed; the scar still ached sometimes, and it seemed as if the sun of Italy had lost its splendor, as if the sweet odors of spring had vanished from the air. This rocky island surrounded him like a firm bulwark; that yearning, that foolish longing was left on the other side of the

blue sea. It had been a happy thought of his to imitate Tiberius and fly to Capri. He liked the place; the simple, childlike inhabitants, whose poverty was alleviated by the mild climate, seemed in their habits and customs to illustrate a fragment of ancient life. The black-eyed Marietta, with her Greek profile and proudly curved lips, had become a dear little friend. It would have been pleasanter for him if an artist had not been seated on every cliff; but they did not really annoy him, since they too busily pursued their work. Even the grave woman with the melancholy face, who had already passed her first youth, was no troublesome neighbor at table; she talked very little, but her voice was low and musical, her words sensible and natural. The only uncomfortable person was the fair-complexioned, short authoress, who was always trying to find material for a novel, and showed a great deal of excitement if a man's eyes rested on her more than a second. She had been excessively lively at the table during the last few days, and the gay young artists seemed to be amusing themselves by turning her head with compliments. Her age, however, rendered a chaperon no longer necessary, and Walter's grave companion merely made a warning gesture, if the sport seemed carried too far. And the lovely

weather, that had favored him! During the whole month there had been only two or three days on which he could not seek his favorite seat on the Punta. Always the same cloudless sky, the same soft yet invigorating air. He watched the approach of spring with new interest. It did not come with the same wonderful speed as in his northern home, where a week was sufficient to expand buds and blossoms; no, the transition from winter, which, it is true, was merely a somewhat severe autumn, was slow and gradual. Even at the time of his arrival, the buds on the vines were so large that he daily expected them to open, but they now first began to unroll their shining brown leaves. The almond and peach trees had been in bloom for weeks, as if a friendly Providence wished to give the eyes of men a long time to feast upon their beauty. Just such a tree stood before Walter; it grew on one of the terraces planted with vines, which sloped away to the grotto. He thought with delight that he could remain here until the end of May; a beautiful portion of Italy would linger in his memory. Memory! it was sometimes a dangerous gift.

He sat up and seized the neglected books, to read once more a quotation he had just made. But he could

not work; perhaps his mind was weary. He had written almost uninterruptedly for nine hours, and might be satisfied with the work he had accomplished. Absorbed in thought, he drew on the edge of the volume a dainty little figure with the wings of a dragon-fly and wonderful little slippers.

“When I see your dainty little feet, I do not understand how they can support so much beauty.”

The hand that guided the pencil was really very beautiful; but for its strong muscles, it might have suited any lady.

A glittering green lizard suddenly darted across the book. Did it wish to mock the dreamer? A low laugh fell upon his ear. He started. Did that little reptile laugh? The tones sounded so elfin-like among the rocks!

“Lizards don’t allow themselves to be caught,” said a clear voice.

Walter suddenly sprang to his feet, as if he had received a shock from at least a dozen Leyden jars. How came she here? Had she flown through the air like Ariel, or swum like a nixie from Sorrento? Had she used the sunbeams or the waves as a means of transit? Did those little feet trip as securely over the

jagged rocks as on the smooth floor? There she sat, about thirty paces away from him, reclining easily and comfortably on the edge of the dizzy precipice, the soft folds of a sea-green cashmere dress floating around the little figure, the red-gold tresses falling over her neck and shoulders; and as she fixed her large sparkling eyes on the Siren Isles, the faithless element seemed to be reflected in their depths. The almond blossoms were not more delicate than the flush that tinged her cheeks; the pomegranate was not brighter than the hue of her pouting lips; and then the delicate line of the dark brows—oh! it was a face that one did not see twice, that could never be effaced from the memory, that might well deprive the wisest man of his senses.

“Good evening, Herr Professor,” she said carelessly, continuing to adorn her little hat with wild flowers.

He remembered what she had told him about her seventh music teacher, who ran away in a rage before the lesson was over and whose hat she had politely carried down into the street; she had undoubtedly smiled at the poor man just as carelessly as she now did at him.

“Good evening, Baroness,” he replied, forcing himself to assume a composure equal to her own, “permit me to call your attention to the fact, that you have chosen

a very dangerous seat, a single careless movement might hurl you over the cliff. I entreat you, Andy, don't let us have any reckless foolhardiness!" he exclaimed, as she turned at his words and leaned far over the edge of the rock.

"Have no fear, sir," she answered smiling, "I am never giddy, and could walk around on top of the tower of the Strasbourg cathedral. What a pretty place you have chosen; Marietta has told me how industriously you work."

"Marietta?" he asked in surprise, "how did you know the child?"

"She brought me here and is waiting yonder"—a slight movement of the shoulders indicated the direction—"with the donkeys. You know I like to talk to peasants, especially Italian ones, there is something so charming in their expressions. Marietta and I have become very intimate; I should like to wager, that she has not yet told you a word about Cecco, her *sposo*, who is fishing for coral on the African coast, and whom she will marry when he returns this winter with his savings. It must be very toilsome and dangerous to get coral. Marietta says she cannot look at the red necklaces without shuddering; they seem to her like petrified drops of blood;

fashionable ladies do not suspect how many tears they often cause. The poor thing's own eyes grew wet as she spoke, for she does not know if Cecco is still alive, or whether a shark has not already swallowed him. Of course no letters are exchanged between them, since they do not know how to read or write. I understood the horror she felt at the sight of the corals, so I secretly slipped the necklace into my pocket—now I can put it on again." She drew out the heavy chain and clasped it around the white neck, which swayed to and fro as gracefully as a bird's.

Walter did not yet know whether he was awake or dreaming. Once more he asked himself: How came she here? What did she want? Merely to show him that she maintained her composure under all circumstances, that she had forgotten the passionate scene, whose memory still had power to stir his blood? Or did some warm human impulse bring the little imp to him?

"You have become very silent, Herr Professor," she said mischievously, "that is the consequence of the solitude in which you spend the greater part of the day."

"Pardon me, Baroness, I am not in the habit of holding intercourse with elves, will-o'-the-wisps, and other fairy creatures."

“There you are mistaken; I am a human being of flesh and blood, though somewhat peculiarly formed. I really have what people call an immortal soul and a warm throbbing heart.”

She raised her long lashes and darted an eager, ardent glance at him. What a look! How many men could have maintained their calmness beneath that gaze!

“To convince you of my corporeal existence . . . here, take my hand;” she held out the slender ungloved fingers; “we are friends and have not even pressed each other’s hands! Is that the way people meet after a separation, which to me at least”—she uttered a faint sigh—“has seemed very long?”

He clasped the delicate fingers and raised them to his lips; a strange ardor thrilled his frame at the touch. Had he not been as stiff and wooden as a stock? Could the most enthusiastic imagination dream of anything more bewitching than to be alone amid such a beautiful scene with this enchanting creature, who seemed to have just sprung from some fairy tale? Yonder gleamed the blue sea, the gigantic cliffs towered into the air, the loveliest bay in the world lay outspread before them. Here she sat, with her little feet coquettishly crossed, drawing her magnificent hair, which glit-

tered in the sunlight like molten gold, through her fingers, while a mischievous smile played around her lips, an alluring glance beamed in her eyes. He would be a donkey not to fall on his knees and worship her.

"At your feet, fair queen," he said in a jesting tone, throwing himself on the grass in a position which afforded him a full view of the childish face that belonged to a woman.

"I like this humility," she answered gaily, stroking his brow with a branch broken from an orange tree.

"I do not need perfume to bewilder me," he murmured; "I fear all clearness of thought has already deserted me."

"Thank Heaven! Then I can meet you on equal terms; your superiority is usually too great."

"What a charming falsehood!" he sighed. "Even your little feet find that remark too comical, and seem to be twitching with convulsive laughter."

"Why do you look at them so intently? Are you going to quote Mirza Schaffy again?"

He looked at her in amazement. "Mirza Schaffy!"

"Why, yes; I don't think the dainty little poem a learned professor was just murmuring can be found in Tacitus—isn't that the man's name?"

"You have been here so long?" he asked doubtfully.

"I have been sitting here so long without your choosing to notice my presence. I was as still as a mouse, that I might not disturb your profound reflections."

A faint flush tinged his forehead; he envied her the talent of gliding over everything as lightly and frankly as a child, while she herself was more difficult to read than the most obscure hieroglyphics. "I was not thinking of the poet, but merely asking myself the practical question, how much these elegant little boots probably cost, and how long or how short a time the thin soles and French heels would resist these sharp stones."

"They cost sixty francs, my inquisitive friend, and I almost believe they are torn already, though this is only the second time I have worn them.

"Then your shoemaker's yearly bill would almost equal an assessor's salary?"

She laughed merrily. "Let us talk seriously."

"I am very curious to see how you will succeed in doing so."

"Don't interrupt me. I will show you that I can read your thoughts as well as you mine."

"When did I ever presume to make such an assertion?"

"Daily and hourly, most forgetful Professor."

"Then you have misunderstood me. On the contrary, the most experienced diplomatist cannot be more impenetrable than you—when you choose. What you desire to say, it is true, you express so eagerly with eyes, smile, hands and gestures, that even a simpleton cannot be mistaken about it. In other things you are as close as——"

"As a fireproof iron safe," she roguishly interrupted. "Do you not know that the lock of such a useful article can only be opened by a certain position of the letters. Suppose for instance we take: W. E., your initials."

She cast a mischievous glance at him, as she twisted one of her curls around her finger.

"If you would be kind enough to sit a little farther from the edge of the cliff, I should be much better able to appreciate your jests."

"You see what respect I have for you—I instantly obey."

She rose and permitted him to make her a comfortable

seat of shawls and cushions, then took up the books and turned the leaves.

"Is this manuscript the result of your stay in Capri?" she asked, taking it in her hand.

He assented.

"And so—!" She gazed at him with a strange expression of mingled amusement and reproach.

He finished the sentence. "So to fill these pages with words, which even if they contained hitherto unknown information about former days, would not add one atom to the happiness of mankind—so you fled from me, poor fool! Shall I laugh at or pity you?"

"What a pretty arabesque you have drawn on the edge! it looks like a dragon-fly."

He bit his lip. "A schoolboy trick, for which I was often reproved at college, but as it seems not frequently enough, since I have not yet laid it aside." She always gained the advantage. Oh! Puck, sauciest of sprites, why did you exercise your magic arts on one, who was not skilful enough to repay your snares and wiles in the same coin?

"I know your thoughts exactly," said Andy, sinking down on the soft seat with the graciousness of a queen; "you are dying of curiosity to discover how I, how we

got here. You supposed us to be in Upper Italy, far enough from this spot—and the thought probably gave you pleasure. Confess it.”

“I must decline to answer,” he replied smiling, and she secretly acknowledged that a strongly marked countenance becomes unusually winning when brightened by a smile; “it would require too long an explanation.”

“Very well, so be it, I want to talk myself now. It is such a pleasure to prattle to any one, who is full of indulgence, and never, never makes an indiscreet use of the most foolish expression.”

With a frank, trusting glance, she held out her little hand. He shook it cordially, as he would have grasped a comrade’s—if he had kissed it, she would have been offended.

“It happened in this way: we had spent too much money in Rome—a thing that often occurs,” she sighed; “my grandparents are excellent people, but they cannot calculate. I understand it best—don’t laugh, Walter, I assure you that I can be only too practical. So we had spent too much money and wanted to lessen our expenses. We formed the heroic resolution not to stay at a first class hotel, but go to a cheaper one, where we seemed very much out of place, and at the end of twenty-

four hours came to the conclusion, that we could not exist there, and returned to the expensive but good house. The moving of the luggage and the change of lodgings of course increased our expenses. Grand-mamma, in a fit of economy, to escape the exorbitant charges of a French modiste, had a dress made by an inexperienced dressmaker: as was to be expected, the style was so old-fashioned I would not allow her to wear it; the material was ruined, so new must be purchased, etc. These are petty troubles, with which I won't weary you—it is a misfortune that we require so much to live."

"Boots at sixty francs a pair," he observed with good-natured amusement.

"My foot looks like an elephant's in any others," she pleaded in defence.

He could not help laughing heartily, and as he sat below her and saw the tip of one tiny foot projecting from beneath her dress, clasped it in his hand, in which there was plenty of room.

"I don't mean literally," she said blushing and drawing it back . . . "Grandpapa had heard from a friend, that living was very cheap in Nice. The good colonel, a modest bachelor, had not needed much, and grandpapa did not consider in his calculations that there were three

of us instead of one person, without including a companion and maids. If we wished to live more reasonably in Italy, we would be obliged to go where there were no large entertainments, no drives on the *Corso*. On making inquiries, Capri was mentioned as the most suitable place, and the physician also recommended it for grand-mamma, who has not entirely recovered from the effects of the fever. We could dismiss the courier, as Herr Von Linden accompanied us; so we left Rome a few days ago, to pay a hasty visit to Naples.

“Ah! what a country!” she cried, extending her arms in an outburst of delight . . . “this is indeed Italy! God created this bay in a specially happy mood, when He said to Himself: ‘I will make something wondrously beautiful, that men may feast their eyes upon it and cease their eternal lamentations about a vale of tears!’ I sat down by the road-side, under Von Linden’s charge, and for a few soldi bought fruit from the brown ragged children,”—she clapped her hands in delight—“imagine his embarrassment when the ——— ambassador surprised us in this situation. As he is an intelligent man, he was greatly amused by my occupation, and sending his carriage away, made one of the group. Herr Von Linden did nothing but smile and bow—at

that moment he undoubtedly considered my acquaintance compromising."

"Is he here too?"

"No, he will follow us in a few days; he accompanied us to the steamer to-day and made himself useful in superintending the arrangement of our luggage. We took possession of a suite of rooms at the Albergo Nazionale, and——"

"The Albergo Nazionale!" he exclaimed with a frown.

"Don't make those ugly wrinkles, I don't like them," she said coaxingly, bending towards him with inimitable grace; "it was recommended to us as the best house, and the fact that you lived there was surely no objection to us."

"So you are the noble family, who the landlady told me this morning with great satisfaction, had taken the whole *primo piano*."

"I really will not prove troublesome to you, rest assured of that, you most uncivil of all uncivil German professors," she answered in her clear, silvery voice, looking at him with frank innocent eyes, like an artless little child; "I merely paid you a first visit this morning, which would not have been proper in your room—usually I will respect your solitude, only sometimes

when I think you are overworking yourself, I'll come and chat away your grave thoughts. May I?"

Once more Walter felt the sweet intoxication of her presence; the setting sun sent forth crimson rays that steeped the world in a fiery glow; the balmy breeze played softly over the golden hair, which glittered with a purple lustre. Was it so impossible that she could belong to him, be his own? Might not love work the miracle of transforming the sportive dragon-fly, the mischievous elf, into a true-hearted woman?

"Andy, where is this to lead?" he exclaimed in an agitated tone, pressing his lips passionately to one of the long curls that at every movement of the graceful head brushed his face. She laid her finger on her lips.

"Have I not forbidden you to interrupt me?" Then glancing at a tiny watch that hung from her belt, she continued: "At the utmost, we have only an hour, though I induced the padrona to serve dinner later."

"You have accomplished that, while we have all vainly entreated the worthy dame to defer the dinner hour that we might watch the sun set out of doors. With what powers are you in league, Andy, that all must dance to your magic flute?"

"Except you," she said reproachfully.

"Because I have an obstinate head on my shoulders."

She cast a side-glance at him; it was a firm, manly head, at all events. The type pleased her; it was one she had rarely met.

CHAPTER V.

I MADE the acquaintance of the other inmates of the albergo at the second breakfast," Andy began after a pause. "There are some faces among the artists by no means uninteresting, but the toilets of the majority were not careful, and they stared at me in silence. By degrees, however, they will probably lay aside this bearishness; they have already made a beginning. There was a lady—oh, sir, I must watch your feminine acquaintances; do you know that she blushed when your name was mentioned? She is not exactly pretty, and looks older than she probably is, but her face is attractive, and her large black eyes might be dangerous to many. Her bearing is aristocratic, and she talks very pleasantly. I learned from her where you were to be found, and farther information was readily volunteered by Fraulein Stösser." She burst into a merry laugh, which echoed softly from the rocks, as if her fellow sprites, the elves, were joining in the mirth among the crags and crevices. "Fraulein Stösser skipped out on

the terrace with me—she skips because it gives her a childlike air—and raved enthusiastically about the art-treasures of Rome. With a single bound she reached Capri and you; then went into raptures over Tiber or Tibull—what is the man's name? I never feel disturbed about confessing my ignorance; fortunately the time has gone by since I hesitatingly answered my governess's terrible questions. Once she began to cry when I said that Socrates was Nero's teacher. I was completely bewildered, for I was really fond of her and did not understand why she cared so much about these old bald-headed Greeks and Romans. Tiberius, is it? *Va bene*, I have no objections. Now I remember, he is said to have been a horrible tyrant; but *Fraulein Stösser* wants to exonerate him, that he may don the snow-white garments of the righteous. She declares he was like one of Byron's heroes—had a touch of *Lara* and the *Corsair*. She was convinced that some unhappy love, the treachery of a woman he adored, ran like a scarlet thread through this mysterious, misunderstood life. She wants to make him the hero of a romance, which she intends to write at Capri, and hopes you will aid her with historical notes, and undertake the revision of her manuscript."

"She is insane," exclaimed Walter indignantly.

"How ungallant, sir! The young lady is one of your most ardent admirers, calls you a light of science, and yet says you are entirely without the usual pedantry and awkwardness of learned men. She spoke of your lonely grandeur and sighed: 'Ah! to know what is contained in the soul of such a man!' I told her that with her vivid imagination, it would be an easy matter to transport herself into such a soul, and as she has taken a sudden and violent fancy for me, she timidly confessed that she had already sketched the outline of a poem, whose hero you were to be. As she uttered the words, her ruddy, somewhat fat countenance assumed such an ecstatic expression, that I quoted in an under tone: 'The poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling!' She embraced me with deep emotion, and whispered: 'Oh! you dear, sweet creature, you understand me, who have wandered through life with none to comprehend my feelings!'" The little baroness mimicked the look and voice of the worthy misunderstood pilgrim so admirably, that the young man at her feet could not help laughing.

"How mischievous you can be, Andy!" he answered, growing graver; "you encourage the girl in her folly. One can't walk three steps with her, without hearing the

exclamation: 'what a charming genre picture, it seems made for a novelette!' at the sight of a group of gossiping women, children playing together, or even a line of donkeys."

"Everybody must do what he likes, so far as he does not annoy others. What injury does the fair-haired authoress commit, except to spoil nice white paper?—and that is always very patient. She has some property, I have learned, and does not need the earnings of her pen——"

"Which is very fortunate, for the earnings of her pen would not be very considerable, so far as I can judge from the specimens she has shown me."

"She enjoys seeing herself in print, and if she does not require us to read her books, we need not grudge her the pleasure. At any rate, you must admit that I have obtained a tolerably fair idea of the inmates of the albergo."

"That is, you have not only turned the heads of the young men, but even those of the elderly ladies."

She laughed saucily.

"Not yet. The artist with the black eyes, whom I like best of the whole company—I am frivolous myself but my taste is grave"—she bent towards her companion

as gracefully as a reed—"this artist is very reserved, I feel that she eyes me with distrust. But I will win her yet; it's uncomfortable to have any one dislike me."

"I am afraid you are a little coquette, Andy!"

She swayed gracefully to and fro. "I may have a little touch of coquetry—is it so very bad?"

"Very bad, if your jest is mistaken for earnest."

"And do you know whether what you call jest is not—earnest?" She glanced at him with one of those radiant looks, that ran like fire through his veins, and against which he needed to arm himself with a triple coat of mail. He wished to seem calm, as, resting carelessly on one elbow, he gazed into her eyes, whose color was now the deepest, purest blue.

"Elves and butterflies are fickle creatures, they deny their own natures when they seek to become stationary."

"Can you not believe in metamorphoses?" She had folded her arms and was leaning back, while a thoughtful expression, very unusual to her, rested on the delicate mouth.

"They are possible, but not probable," replied Walter, "and only to a higher class, from a fairy child to a queen."

"Or from a baroness to a countess," she exclaimed

laughing, but the next instant her white teeth were buried in her under lip, and the delicate black brows contracted in a frown. "Does that seem to you a higher class?" she asked sharply.

"A higher rank, at any rate," he answered; the change in her countenance had escaped his notice, for he was busied in trying the strength of his arm by hurling pebbles into the sea. "The Almanach de Gotha, with which your capricious Highness is so well acquainted, gives indisputable information on that point."

"You are in a very disagreeable mood, Herr Professor," pouted Andy; "the air of Capri has roused an overweening consciousness of masculine superiority. You are resting from your toilsome studies by teasing and making sport of me—but I am in a very serious mood to-day."

"Indeed! I have not perceived it. Tell me what lines my face is to wear——"

"Lines? No, no, I don't wish to see any, they used to show that your thoughts were far away. Answer—for what do you take me?"

"For an excessively spoiled child," he replied, "in whose path all vie with each other in scattering flowers, whom all adore; for a little lady who always follows her

own will, her own whims, her own fancies, who considers the world a stool on which she is to set two pretty little feet—of course after a cushion has been pushed under them.”

“A friendly sketch of character,” she replied, pettishly averting her little head.

“Be frank, Andy. My words cannot offend you, because unfortunately the reproach they contain conveys an equal amount of flattery.”

“I prefer to have the latter clothed in a pleasanter form. Have you well considered, learned sir, why Andy has become a person, who according to your description, is a cross between a porcelain figure and an elegant toy, and really belongs in a glass case?”

“I regret that you intentionally misunderstand me! I was to tell you what you were, not what you might have become.”

“Might have become?”

“Yes, if a strong, loving hand had guided you and developed the wonderful talents, which you—” he placed a strong emphasis on the words—“intentionally neglect.”

“I have no talents,” she answered defiantly.

“That is not the point in question,” he eagerly exclaimed. “I do not mean that, with an eighth teacher,

you might have learned to play on the piano, but that you might have been educated, by exerting your intellectual and moral powers, to reach a lofty goal. You ought to have been taught to exercise a healthful control over yourself—without this control, we can neither become artists and statesmen, nor good mothers and housekeepers, nor—in a word—sensible human beings.”

“How greatly you are mistaken!” she cried, springing to her feet, “there has been no lack of this control. It drove me almost to madness!” She angrily clenched her little hands and gazed gloomily into vacancy, as if her mental vision saw some hated form. “And because I suffered for years under this despotic, cruel control, I have gained a right to follow only my own will, my own pleasure.” Then turning suddenly to Walter, she hastily asked: “Did you know that I had been married?”

“I must believe it, though you seem so childish that I should have thought you even now too young to take such a step.”

“I was a wife eight years—have been a widow two, and shall celebrate my twenty-seventh birthday next month.”

As he gazed at the slight, dainty figure, with softly rounded arms and shoulders, the small face, beneath

whose delicate skin one could almost see the blood flow, and the rosebud mouth, she looked like a girl in the first flower of her youth.

“Herr Von Linden probably described my husband as a hard, cold egotist.”

He bent his head in acquiescence. The singular little creature interested and bewitched him more than ever.

“He could not say more, for he knew him very slightly and was a rare guest in our house. Why did I marry him? No one compelled me to do so; the act was my own free will. To be sure, I had no idea of what awaited me in my new life. I fancied it would be only a change of residence, and the thought that the servants and grandpapa’s officers would call me ‘Madame’ amused me very much. My grandparents might have urged me to reflect, but in our circle marriage was purely a business transaction. The best people find it perfectly natural that social relations and pecuniary considerations should decide such matters; afterwards the betrothed couple may be permitted to love each other. Men who, I knew very well, would never have thought of their brides but for their wealth, and suddenly appeared in the character of ardent lovers, always seemed to me very pitiful creatures. A girl at least remains

passive. Other circumstances also exerted an influence. My grandparents were very fond of me, but I was often a troublesome charge. My father, of whom I have a very indistinct recollection, died heavily in debt, and grandpapa was not only obliged to pay these sums, but also support his son's orphaned child. The titles of General and Excellency sound very well. We kept carriages, gave dinners and balls, and I was dressed like a little princess. But the word money was the beginning and end of every conversation. We spent more than we had; the end of every quarter brought quarrels, because then the bills were received. We always passed these rocks successfully, but grandpapa could never set anything aside, in order after a time to accumulate a little property for me. The officers who had danced with me ever since I wore short dresses and aprons, could count on their fingers that their commander's granddaughter did not even possess the usual dowry. Many of them were rich, but no one suited me. I was too childish—fancied there was not a single person who possessed any brains, and thought myself far more clever than all. Just at that time grandpapa informed me that Baron Von Valmont had asked for my hand. He was much older

than I, and a great invalid, having had his spine injured by a fall from his horse; but he was a man of good family, bore a noble name, was considered honorable, possessed a fine intellect and large fortune. A match by no means to be despised.

“‘Did he inspire me with any repugnance?’ asked grandmamma, who pleaded his cause like a skilful ambassador. Not at all. I laughed at his sarcastic remarks and liked his reserved manners. I always preferred men who were cold and distant. I felt more surprise that Valmont had chosen me than that I should accept him. As every one praised his keen intellect and profound knowledge, I thought it my duty to acknowledge that he must expect nothing from me in this respect. I had learned very little, I said to him; with the exception of a few languages, I knew nothing at all, and doubted whether any taste for learning would ever develop in my mind. He seemed amused, and assured me that he abhorred learned women. If I felt no aversion to reading, some few deficiencies could easily be supplied. I was fond of reading, but my governess and grandmother only gave me moral books for young girls, or at the utmost a sentimental novel. This was no food for my mind, and one day I startled several majors’ and

colonels' wives, who were drinking coffee with us, by remarking that virtue was very tiresome.

“ On my seventeenth birthday I became Baroness Von Valmont; my husband was suffering more than usual from severe pain in the back, so that he could not stand during the ceremony, but was forced to sit, which, as you may suppose, was the cause of much comment. It made no particular impression upon me; I knew he was often ill, and sincerely pitied him. We spent a few months in the country, where I passed my time as I had always done. My husband never claimed my society until dinner; I could indulge my love for riding, driving and hunting unrestrained; country life was new, and delighted me. When sure that no one saw me, I climbed the highest trees, and sat as happily as a bird in its nest. Reading became a passion. The baron had placed an extensive library at my disposal, and I was permitted to take what I chose. Imagine a child of seventeen devouring the works of Balzac! I looked at life with strangely disenchanted eyes, after the hand of this sceptical guide had led me through the labyrinth of human passions. After this experience, George Sand's novels found me cold—I was bewitched by her descriptions, but no longer believed the pathetic passages.

“A few months after our marriage Valmont had a very strange conversation with me. His disease had of late made rapid progress ; he could scarcely leave his chair, and suffered terrible tortures without moving a muscle—to that I must bear witness. He was an *esprit faussé*—a certain greatness, a silent heroism, could not be denied him. ‘My dear Andy,’ he said, ‘your life with me will prove different from what I at first supposed. My disease is developing with great rapidity, and makes me indifferent to everything that is not directly connected with my physical condition. I cannot give you love—you would probably care very little for it—and it does not enter my mind to ask it from you. You are too peculiar, have too piquante a charm, not to exert a powerful magic over men, and a young girl with a lively imagination cannot be expected to remain in nun-like seclusion. I have no desire, nor will I consent to bind you to my sick-room ; you shall have perfect liberty to go into society, dance, amuse yourself, and receive attention ; you will then bring me a cheerful face, and what I see of the outside world through you, will at least wear no sorrowful mien. I only beg you to choose me for the confidant of your love affairs, for as you are very inexperienced and tolerably reckless, you might become involved in serious

difficulties. A lady must not only show taste, but wisdom and prudence in the choice of her admirers. One precept I should like to give you, namely that all the happiness love can bestow, even under the most favorable circumstances, can never bear the slightest comparison to the sorrow it invariably causes. If you wish to enjoy life, avoid this foolish feeling as you would a contagious disease.' "

"And it was an honorable gentleman, who scattered this poisonous blight over a young, innocent soul!" cried Walter in an outburst of indignation. "Did he have so low an opinion of woman's nature, that he could not appeal to the nobler feelings of self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, and pity?"

Andy shook her head. "If he had any ideal, it was represented in the persons of Lord Chesterfield and Chamfort; he quoted their sayings, their principles had become a part of his nature. I distinctly remember the moment he said those words to me. I had fastened up my thin muslin dress, that I might jump rope to my heart's content in the lonely avenue in the park, where I was sure of not being surprised by the servants. I had been told that the baron wished to speak to me, and panting for breath, rushed into his room with flying, dis-

ordered curls. Think, he kept me so for eight years!" she cried, clenching her little hands. "Imagine between these fingers a poor bird, the most active and gayest of creatures, only able to move its head and wings when the cruel vice relaxed a little." Tears of anger filled her eyes. "I am sure that he at last hated me from the bottom of his heart. He envied my vigor, my indestructible elasticity and freshness, which nothing could crush; my perfect health probably seemed like an insult to his feebleness. The world admired his generosity in giving me unlimited freedom, loading me with gifts, and intentionally habituating me to the refined luxury of wealth, until it became indispensable. Yes, I was permitted to dance all night, attend riding and hunting parties, where crowds of young men always followed my steps; but then came hours of torment, when I was forced to sit beside him and amuse him. He had married me for the sole purpose of having a companion, who could not run away. At first I did this willingly; I pitied the invalid, who could only see the outside world from his chair through the windows; but he wanted no sympathy, it roused his anger that a stupid little girl like me should compassionate him. I must dance the tight-rope before him, to amuse him; he had engaged

me for that. Gay and light-hearted, I readily accommodated myself to this state of affairs, talked all sorts of nonsense, told him the news, mimicked various people in society, and criticized my admirers, without allowing myself to be at all disturbed by his bitter remarks or sarcasm.

“Soon he drew the reins tighter, tried to discover how he could torture me in the most sensitive spot. For this purpose he wished me to lay aside my quick, eager mode of speech, and to accomplish this, said a hundred times a day in the most courteous tone: “Repeat those words more slowly, dear Andy, I do not understand them.” I was forced to look, laugh, turn my head, move my hands and feet differently, when in his presence.

“Hours came when I could not be gay, because I felt lonely and desolate—I was still so young,” she interposed as if in apology—“hours when I longed for—love! As if some malicious demon had betrayed the sorrow of my heart, he required the most absurd harlequin tricks of me; then jeered at my dull spirits, and exhausted his subtle intellect in biting speeches, whose venomous points pressed deep into my soul. You will wonder that I have had no romance to tell until now.” She laughed roguishly, and the black brows which

formed so piquant a contrast to the golden hair, lost their frown. I have loved, or fancied I loved, three times."

Three times! Walter was surprised at this frankness; at first it even affected him almost unpleasantly; but Andy was an exceptional creature, and as such must be measured by no ordinary standard. Her husband seemed to have labored systematically to imprint a false stamp upon her character—it was a marvel, that she had withstood the experiment so well.

"My first love, which as usual was a great piece of folly, came to a very sudden and ridiculous end. Its object was—as was natural—my cousin's tutor, who instructed me in literature. He had, according to my ideas in those days, a wonderfully fine head—I compared him to Schiller, probably on account of his large nose—which rested on a very awkward body. As he was not obliged to make any gymnastic evolutions during the lessons, and concealed his shapeless feet under the table, while enthusiastically reading Torquato Tasso or Mary Stuart, this incongruity did not annoy me. He was somewhat arrogantly treated in my relative's house, and I, who abhorred any injustice, therefore thought myself obliged to show him the greatest

cordiality. I even carried this so far as to prepare myself for his lessons, and my governess, who did not perceive the cause of this transformation, praised his admirable method of teaching.

“In a short time he behaved like a fool, sighed audibly, brought me flowers, and sang my praise in very tolerable verses. The poetry pleased me; until then, no one had thought of offering their homage in this way, and as I could not rhyme two lines myself, I looked at these productions, which really were not bad, with great admiration.

“After my confirmation, a ball was given to introduce me into society. I had used a great deal of strategy in procuring an invitation for the tutor, by representing to my grandparents that on this day, when my education might be considered, in a certain sense, completed—a fine education it was!—the teachers whose patience I had subjected to so many trials ought not to be absent. Grandpapa praised my consideration, and I gained my point. A first ball is an important event—you need not laugh, Herr Professor. When we slip into our satin shoes, we leave our childhood behind. The long train of my crêpe dress filled me with pride; I seemed to have grown much taller. You cannot imagine how much

attention I, the granddaughter of the house, received. The most elegant cavaliers strove to obtain a dance. The tutor, who timidly stood aloof, did not venture to break through the circle of uniforms that surrounded me. I cast a glance at him and scrawled his name under the first waltz, a distinction for which I was afterwards severely reproved. When I succeeded in making my way to his side, I informed him of the happiness awaiting him. He seemed more perplexed than pleased. 'Good heavens!' he stammered, 'I fear I shall make you angry; I do not waltz well!' And I had just given the best waltzer in the ball-room, Count W., a pert refusal. To me, to whom dancing was natural—before I had taken a lesson, I could imitate the most intricate steps—this excuse seemed incredible. How could any one, who possessed the use of two legs, be unable to dance! I encouraged him to think he would succeed admirably, and took his arm, answering grandmamma's reproofing look with a careless smile, as if I did not suspect how I could have incurred her displeasure. Meantime the object of my enthusiastic regard was entertaining me in a very prosaic manner, namely, talking about his boots. The shoemaker had shamefully disappointed him; the boots ordered for this occasion were not finished. Un-

fortunately he had not been able to find a tolerable substitute in any shop ; so his feet were encased in by no means elegant coverings, which, moreover, were much too large for him. As he had directed my attention to his ill-shod feet, I could not help noticing that the boots were very thick, especially in comparison with the delicate ones worn by the Hussars. We took our places ; my ideal really did dance execrably. Whether it excited his nerves to clasp me in his arms, or whether he was diffident, I know not ; but he dashed wildly through the room, running against other couples, stepping on ladies' dresses, whirling into corners and upsetting chairs. When he tried to dance backward, his feet became entangled in my dress ; he stumbled and slipped, but instead of releasing me, clung the closer, tore off half the trimming from my skirt, and brought me down with him. It must have looked extremely comical, but at that moment I had no appreciation of the ludicrous. The younger and less independent we are, the more terrible it is to appear ridiculous ; it requires great firmness of character to be able to endure a laugh. I started up before any one had time to assist me ; my cheeks were burning ; I fancied I read nothing but derision in the eyes bent upon me. What I should now consider

merely an accident that would rouse my mirth, then appeared like an ineffaceable disgrace. If I could have sunk into an abyss, I would have seized upon this mode of escape with delight. My eyes must have blazed with anger, for the poor delinquent seemed actually crushed, as I turned my back upon him. Of course my love was at an end—how could I care for a man who had elephant's feet, wore thick-soled boots and made a scene in the midst of a ball-room? You may reproach me with frivolity, but I don't know whether deeper feelings would have endured this trial. I was afterwards scolded by my grandparents for my want of tact in opening the ball with the tutor, and I must confess answered very rudely, for I thought I had already been sufficiently punished. I wept half the night, and when I awoke the next morning my ideal had shrunk into an unbearable pedant. This is the history of number one. Number two—Isn't it strange that I tell you all this?" Andy interrupted herself, looking anxiously at Walter.

"I should think so if it were any one else," he replied, casting a smiling glance at the changeful face, "but not with you. Your whole appearance is a charter of originality."

"Why should I not confess my follies to you? There

are none of which I have cause to be ashamed. I never did anything wrong, never!" She stood firmly on her little feet, and her nixie eyes sparkled. "And I don't tell lies! Falsehoods are cowardly!"

"Haven't you just persuaded Fraulein Stösser to commit a new folly?" Erichsen asked mischievously.

Andy turned gaily on her heel. "That is no falsehood," she cried saucily, "life needs a little comedy, or we shall all fall asleep. She is happy, and we are amused—an innocent pastime."

"Even before the strict tribunal?" he asked earnestly.

"Don't be tiresome," she replied, drawing the spray of orange blossoms across his brow.

Erichsen did not release the white hand until he had pressed a long kiss upon it. "Now go on," said he, resting on one elbow, and gazing expectantly into the delicate, beautiful face.

CHAPTER VI.

THE Punta di Mitromania was already veiled in shadow, while the crimson light of the setting sun still flamed on the sea; the mountains were bathed in hues of still deeper violet, sail-boats glided like swans across the smooth surface of the water, and the dashing of the foaming waves only reached their ears in a subdued murmur. It was a happy, blissful state, to recline in one of the fairest spots on earth, listening to the prattle of a lovely woman and watching the slender lizards darting to and fro, glittering with new colors at every motion.

“Go on!” she repeated with a haughty curl of the lip. “How despotic, sir. The sultan could not have given a more imperious command to his Scheherazade.”

He merely shrugged his shoulders and pointed to the lengthening shadows.

“I had been married two or three years, and was already suffering under a tyranny which clothed itself in the mildest form, while resting on my shoulders like the heaviest yoke, paralyzing my wings and constantly driving me to useless rebellion. Among my most ardent

admirers—it is needless to say that I counted them by dozens—was Count P., a remarkably handsome man, versed in all the forms of social intercourse, and a master of every accomplishment. He was my favorite partner in the dance, my companion at races, excursions, hunting parties, for, as my husband's cousin, he had a certain claim to this distinction. Baron Valmont in his most sarcastic manner warned me against him, as he always sneeringly destroyed every feeling, every interest that awoke in my heart. 'Fall in love with him, if it amuses you,' he said, 'but the count is really nothing more than a handsome groom; his soul reeks of the stables if his uniform does not.' Such remarks irritated me to opposition, and partly from defiance I persuaded myself that I really liked the count. He had distinguished himself in battle, and women love nothing more than courage. His mental horizon, it is true, did not extend very far, but he could talk well and entertainingly on subjects he understood.

"We had both been invited to a brilliant wedding-party, given by some relatives living in the country. The festivities lasted several days, and as the host was wealthy, his hospitality was magnificent; exquisite wine flowed in rivers, and the butler constantly brought fresh supplies. The gentlemen's spirits thus became very

much excited, which correspondingly depressed mine. The mirth caused by the fumes of wine is exceedingly repulsive to me—nay, almost inspires terror, because it is impossible to calculate upon it; it seems as if the animal natures of men were unloosed, and it is humiliating that we, who are proud of our culture and education, still have something of the animal in us. Count P. could probably bear a great deal; at any rate he was less changed than the others, but I distrusted his flushed face and sparkling eyes. I felt his arm clasp me closer in the dance, his hand pressed mine—my heart throbbed with fear——” Andy’s long lashes drooped, and a deep flush suffused her face. Perhaps at that moment she regretted that she had not been a little more reserved in her communications. Walter possessed sufficient tact to keep his eyes fixed intently on the motionless sea. “I did not wish to dance any more,” she hastily continued, “but he would not release me, and whirling more and more rapidly in the waltz, whispered in my ears a mad declaration of love. Fortunately I only half comprehended what he said, but I felt a fierce indignation rise within me, that he should dare, while intoxicated with wine, to make declarations upon which he would scarcely have ventured in cooler moments. I answered in a few grave, haughty words which were probably

drowned by the music and buzz of voices around us, and when he at last led me back to my place, pleaded fatigue in order not to be compelled to dance again. At the first opportunity I glided out into the dark, quiet garden; the loud mirth within annoyed me, and the words I had just heard had aroused an angry excitement. A man, in a fit of intoxication, might address words of tenderness to a chambermaid, but not a lady. I had scarcely advanced a few steps, when I heard some one following me. I did not think it possible that the count would carry his insolence so far, after the answer he had just received.

“And yet it was he! He stood in my path, repeating his protestations, and when in silent scorn I turned to leave him, suddenly clasped me in his arms and kissed me!” Andy clenched her little hands, and her eyes looked almost black in her passionate indignation. “He will never, never kiss me again; I cannot conquer the thrill of repugnance,” she murmured in an almost inaudible tone, then continued aloud: “Yes, he kissed me in spite of my struggles, held me by force—was it not unworthy of a gentleman? I thrust him from me so violently that he staggered back and darted away. Hot tears flowed down my cheeks; I cannot tell you how miserable and dishonored I felt at that moment. A

loathing of the whole world seized upon me. The count's flushed, agitated countenance seemed transformed into the face of a Silenus; his kiss burned on my cheek like a fiery brand. I washed and rubbed the spot, and as I thought I could not efface the trace sufficiently, put a Spanish fly on it."

"A Spanish fly!" Walter could not possibly maintain his gravity, and laughed heartily. "How cruel to disfigure that soft, delicate cheek!" It was a wild idea, only fit to emanate from the brain of a Puck.

"Where is the absurdity?" she asked angrily. "I willingly disfigured myself for a few weeks, to efface that disgusting memory. People burn out the bite of a mad dog—a man who can no longer control himself inspires me with still greater terror and aversion. The next morning I drove home, pleading a violent toothache; the Spanish fly gave the excuse a show of probability, and my acquaintances wondered that I had not shrunk from such a harsh remedy. I longed to reach my husband, he was my only protection, and although he wounded and tortured, he never insulted me. Sobbing bitterly, I told him what had happened, and protested that I was not aware of having given cause for such insolence. He answered courteously, that the

matter required neither defence nor apology, he was far from imputing any blame to me.

“‘I told you,’ he added, ‘that the count is a handsome groom, and when excited by wine, he treated you like a pretty maid-servant. A man, who does not know in advance what reception such caresses will meet, is either a donkey or a brute, frequently both.’ This was the tone he adopted towards me, when I was longing for one word of comfort and encouragement. I did not see the count again. When, after a few weeks, I forgot the painful scene and once more entered society, he had left the city. I suppose Valmont, who often assisted his cousin when the latter was embarrassed for money, had dictated this punishment.

“‘It would be better for me to say nothing of the last three years ; my blood boils when I remember them and recall all I endured. Death is said to exert a reconciling influence—but it failed to produce that effect on me. Do not blame me, when I say I uttered a sigh of relief when Valmont at last closed his eyes. I was released, set at liberty, I could not feign, my eyes had no tears, and only consideration for my grandparents induced me to wear mourning. Why should I don black garments, when my heart was exulting like a lark ? During the last few years of his life, Valmont had no longer

allowed me to see any one; in his coldly courteous manner he explained, that I was too young and imprudent to go into society alone; besides it would give rise to severe criticism, if for the sake of amusement, I left him when his sufferings were known to be increasing. I yielded, because I was compelled; I would have done so gladly, if I had thought his heart desired my presence. But no, he played with me cruelly, as a cat tortures a mouse, and it afforded him Satanic pleasure to clip more and more closely the wings of the little bird placed in his power; he irritated me to anger, and then laughed at my childish tears, till I learned to repress them. I was forced to read aloud to him for hours, and he intentionally selected books I could not understand, sceptical philosophies, which he pitilessly explained. I accustomed myself to read mechanically, without thinking of the contents, for I thus best escaped the torture. When he noticed it, he interrupted me at every sentence and asked my opinion; it interested him to observe the effect of these teachings upon an entirely uncultivated mind. Then he treated me almost like a simpleton, whose feeble brain could scarcely grasp the plainest subject. It is true, I had little positive knowledge, but I was neither stupid nor hard to understand. I had a quick, unconscious perception of the true and beautiful, and the

things that pleased me were certainly neither evil nor insignificant. A few months before his death, I experienced a moment, which even now I remember with satisfaction, for it avenged me on my tormentor. Valmont had one day driven me to extremities, when I started up and approaching close to him, said in a voice trembling with passion : ‘ Do not believe I am so simple as not to perceive your real design. You intend to crush all my vivacity and strength, because you envy both these gifts. Your much praised stoicism in the endurance of bodily suffering does not excite my admiration ; I can only admire one whose soul rises to real grandeur ; on the contrary I despise you, because you are consumed by the petty, feminine, pitiful feeling of envy. You envy me my youth, my health, the freshness and power of my intellect, but I assure you you will not succeed in bending me ; there is steel and iron in my blood when I wish to offer resistance, and I am sustained by the consolation, that this slavery will not last for ever.’ He grew ashy pale, as if he feared my flashing eyes, and with an attempt at a scornful smile, replied : ‘ Do you allude in this friendly manner to my death ?’ ‘ Yes,’ I answered fearlessly, ‘ the first day of freedom will repay me for all I have suffered. I will throw myself exultantly into the gay stream of society, and eagerly enjoy all of which I have

been deprived. Whether I must wait for that day a longer or shorter time is immaterial, I know it must come. According to the principles you have inculcated, you will believe it impossible for me to mourn you—what should induce me to do so? Only those who have given pleasure to some one are lamented—perhaps your valet will miss you, but I do not think it probable—and now I will read on.’ The fact that I quietly sat down and continued to read in a perfectly steady voice as if nothing had occurred, produced the greatest impression upon him. I am well aware that a gentle, yielding person would not have addressed such harsh words to an almost dying man, but I am not gentle and yielding, I love those who love, and hate those who hate me.

“Besides, my outburst of indignation had the best results; Baron Valmont probably perceived that he was mistaken in believing me a thoughtless child; he respected my powers of observation, and therefore gradually omitted the daily tortures. At last I even thought I detected traces of a warmer feeling, for—but that is connected with number three, my third lover,” she interrupted herself, blushing

“You are exciting yourself by these reminiscences, Andy,” said Walter, taking her hand. “How often we err in judging the people with whom fate casts our lot!

I believed your life had been one of constant sunshine. Forget the past ; nowhere can you do so more easily than amid these beautiful scenes. Look at the purple hues on the coast of Sorrento. The last greeting of the sun !”

“I have accustomed myself to forget,” she eagerly replied ; “no one has a greater talent for effacing unpleasant pictures from the memory, than I. I merely make these confessions, that you may know the gay, envied Baroness Valmont has had her share of the common capital of grief. So my third love”—She averted her face till it was concealed by her luxuriant curls, and stirred the loose pebbles with the tip of her tiny foot.—“It touched my heart”—her voice trembled slightly—“and prepared me bitter sorrow. He was a musician of great genius ; I heard him play, and his wonderful violin completely subjugated my soul ; tones such as he lured from the instrument, might stir the calmest nature. He was a god, a demon, when he wielded the bow. I often met him at the house of a friend ; even outside the concert-room he was an interesting person, a Slavonian, that is, polished, ardent, fascinating, well versed in the forms of society, but faithless and unreliable. He possessed a few letters from me, written on formal occasions ; it was perhaps imprudent to have entered into

friendly relations with him at all, but they did not contain a word of which I had reason to be ashamed. Whether to gratify his vanity, or because he thought he should induce me to take an extreme step more quickly by compromising me, I know not, but he was dishonorable enough to show these letters, especially their signatures, in a circle of young people, without allowing them to see their contents, which would have removed every suspicion. I had been very deeply attached to him, more so than I would have confessed, and I was the more deeply wounded by this despicable boasting, whose sole object was to show the world that the Baroness Von Valmont also had a place in Don Juan's catalogue. One of my husband's friends called him to an account; he was compelled to give up the letters and state in writing that he had been guilty of a base calumny. I felt deeply touched, that Valmont on this occasion uttered no sarcastic, scornful remark, but showed a compassionate consideration. I soon held up my head again, and recovered from the shock of this experience more rapidly than I had at first expected. Valmont restored my letters, and on this occasion a singular conversation took place between us. I was sitting, according to my custom, at the window reading aloud;

he gazed intently at me a long time and then begged me to come nearer. I approached the chair, which he had not left for years, and asked what he desired. 'I have done you a service to-day, Andy,' said he. I nodded and replied: 'A service, which no man of honor would have refused a defenceless woman'—'You do not thank me for it?'—'I have thanked your friend, who dealt the punishment'—'I too should like to hear a word of thanks from your lips'—'*Je vous remercie*,' I replied, intentionally using the coldest language in the world, and just touching the hand he extended—'Would you give me a kiss?' he asked—'Never!' I exclaimed, recoiling as if from the sting of a viper, and then remembering that it was the man to whom I legally belonged, who had made the request, I added: 'If you insist upon it, I will obey; I can do it as well as to give you your daily injections of morphine'—'I will not put your powers of endurance to so severe a test,' he replied, 'you have an icy nature'—'I!' I thoughtlessly exclaimed, 'if I loved any one, I would allow myself to be kissed to death?' A glance like the stroke of a dagger fell upon me. 'Be kind enough to go on with your reading, Andy.' I already regretted the words that had involuntarily escaped me; they were unnecessarily cruel,

but I could not recall them. How terribly they had angered him, I learned afterwards to my sorrow in the will——”

The young baroness gazed gloomily into vacancy. Walter did not interrupt the silence. She was the most singular being he had ever met: child, girl, woman, all in one, she united the lights and shadows of each period of life. Even though he understood how she had become so, the result bewildered him.

“I have been a widow two years,” she said in a gayer tone, pushing back her heavy hair with both hands, and putting on her little hat, “and live with my grandparents again, as I am not old enough to set up a separate establishment.”

“I should think so,” he answered, laughing; “when I saw you in Florence, I took you for a little girl fresh from boarding-school, who was seeing the world for the first time.”

“And I am seeing it for the first time!” She started up and extended her arms exultantly, “and I did not dream how beautiful it was! I should not like to return to the gray, cold North, where, from pure thinking and working, people cannot enjoy themselves. Only a nation like the Germans could be satisfied with their harsh

climate and barren nature ; as the earth offers few charms, they occupy themselves with abstract speculations. What do people need here ? A few olive and orange trees are enough for the support of a whole family, who enjoy far more than our country can give any well-established——”

“ Professor,” said Walter, gaily, completing the sentence.

“ Yes, indeed, than any horribly learned Professor. Come, Walter, I shall convert you to my divine frivolity ; away with the stupid old trash.” She pushed the heap of books with her foot.

“ My Geneva edition !” he exclaimed, bending over them. It cut him to the heart that she took so little interest in science.

“ Let them lie ; Marietta will pick them up carefully ; books are sacred to a person who cannot read.”

She hurried up the steep, dangerous path before him. The delicate green dress, the gauze veil, the gleaming hair floated in the wind ; oftentimes a stone rolled away from under the tiny feet, and she seemed to slip, but refused the arm he offered, and recovered her balance with wonderful ease. Puck, Cobweb or Mustard-Seed could not have moved more boldly. And how gay was

the return to the albergo! Andy sat on Marietta's donkey, whose docility and sprightliness distinguished him in a most favorable manner from his Northern blood-relations. A throng of brown-skinned children and half-grown girls, whose black hair hung in disorder over their foreheads and cheeks, had joined them, because a report had spread abroad that the Signora with the golden curls would buy everything that was offered. Walter warned her not to be too generous; the islanders were like children, who, if an inch was granted, took an ell; she would soon be unable to take a step without being haunted by their persistent begging. Andy laughed, and thought it delightful that all these people seemed to have no other occupation than to form a voluntary escort for strangers. She had provided herself with an inexhaustible stock of soldi and small coins, and took everything the dirty hands offered. She talked to each individual, and the crowd praised the "*gentilezza*" of the fair-haired "*principessa*"—she must be a princess at least who understood their language so well.

"We shall probably have the entire population at our heels, by the time we reach the albergo," observed Walter, as several old women, who sat before the houses

spinning, swelled the procession ; a man who was trimming vines in a garden, interrupted his work, and also joined the party. Andy's little hat was filled with flowers, she held in her hand a large bouquet, and moreover had thrust into her own and the professor's pockets an immense quantity of articles only fit to be thrown away : shells, star-fish, branches of black coral, bits of marble said to have been taken from Tiberius's villa, shining pebbles, etc. She felt a childish pleasure in these things, and always stretched out her hands for every new article.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Albergo Nazionale lay in the hollow between the mountains, that towered above the village of Capri on the east, and the high plateau on the west. Accommodating itself to the inequalities of the ground, it required long study to find one's way ; stairs, terraces and balconies united and divided the different stories ; if one had entered on one side from level soil, he might confidently expect to descend several steps on the other. For instance, there was a mysterious communication between the apartments occupied by General Von Willberg's family and the highest terrace, which Andy particularly liked, and declared she intended to choose for her favorite seat.

The professor's windows opened upon a loggia, which was his undisputed domain, and afforded a view of the steep staircase in the rocks, that leads to Anacapri, and whose five hundred and thirty-five steps were ascended several times a day by women and children, bearing heavy burdens on their heads. From the loggia one

could reach—that is, if he were not afraid of taking a leap—an orange and citron garden, rich in fruits and flowers, where the roses were already unfolding their fragrant buds, and which was enclosed by a high wall that supported Andy's terrace, which afforded a beautiful view of the Mediterranean and Neapolitan coast. The padrona had good reason to be proud of the situation of her house. The rooms were large, protected from the sun, the dining-hall spacious and airy, furnished with blue glazed tiles, whose smoothness was even more dangerous than the most polished floor; on the walls hung all sorts of genre pictures and landscapes of questionable merit, with which artists had made good the deficiencies in their bills. The owner's eyes did not willingly linger on these paintings, for which she thought she had paid far too much; as souvenirs they were tolerably indifferent to her practical mind. She preferred strangers, who travelled with couriers and servants and required a great deal of attention, to the brightest stars in the sky of art.

On the evening of this same day, the artist with the grave earnest eyes, was standing at the open window of a small, very plainly furnished room. She had extinguished the light, in order not to attract the insects,

those torments of Southern climates. The lady was somewhat beyond her first youth; her face had either never been remarkable for freshness of coloring, or the hand of care had prematurely effaced its bloom; but the yellowish tinge of the pale complexion only made the regularity of the features more apparent. Beautifully formed brows arched over the dark eyes, and the thick hair, arranged in heavy braids, was a beauty in itself. The impression produced by the whole appearance was peculiar, rather than attractive. The broad brow and firmly compressed lips spoke of strength of will and intellectual toil. She might have been a daughter of the country in which she resided to pursue her studies; her tall slender figure, in the floating robes of a priestess, would have been a perfectly harmonious object in the temple of Pæstum. She had not, however, been born on classic soil, but under the misty sky of North Germany.

Fraulein Gertrude Stade was a Hanoverian, and had first seen the light of this world near Luneburg, through heavy clouds of peat-smoke. How a love of brilliant coloring, a talent for depicting glowing hues, was developed in the mind of the child amid such dull surroundings, shading from gray to brown, would be diffi-

cult to explain. Enough that it was so ; that she found patrons, who gave the talented girl a sum which, though small, rendered it possible for her to go to Paris and study under Couture. Her kindly, commonplace mother had never been able to understand how she happened to have such a daughter ; it seemed to her a much more solid and tangible method of gaining a livelihood to sew and embroider for money, or at any rate to teach school. Gertrude could undoubtedly have passed the examination, for she had a clear head, and it had never been difficult for her to learn. If only this dabbling with brushes and colors had not interfered ! Every penny of the scanty pocket-money she earned by sewing was expended in bribing the children she sketched and painted to sit still. And the stay in Paris was a torture to the widow ! Gertrude was young and by no means ugly—who knew what might happen to her there ? Of course no one in the little city would wish to marry her when she returned.

But she did not return, except to make visits. What could the struggling, ambitious girl, who was literally starving for her art, have found to do in the little town ? Perhaps the mayor or the grocer at the market might have given her orders to paint their portraits—which

would have been merely an act of kindness, for to suppose that a native of the town, and a girl into the bargain, could really do any good work, was asking a great deal—but Gertrude did not desire this honor. If she had not brought her mother the round sum of several hundred thalers as the price of her last picture, the latter would have doubted whether her so-called artistic education had led to any useful result. The young girl was forced to renounce the idea of taking her mother to Munich; she had had such bright dreams of thus giving her a peaceful old age and establishing a comfortable home for herself, but soon perceived how impossible it would be to tear the old woman from her native town; she could be no support to her daughter, but a hindrance; her worrying and lamenting would have exerted a paralyzing effect on her labors. So she contented herself by regularly sending home a portion of her receipts, which were by no means large, as she was too proud and scrupulous to ask great prices.

Her solitary life enabled her to devote herself exclusively to her art, it is true; but it often seemed very cold and charmless. She had chosen a man's profession, but was too womanly in her nature to seek recreation in a man's way. She could not make excursions to the

mountains alone; she could not go to a public garden; after a walk in the suburbs, she could do nothing but spend the evening in her own room. She was not yet old enough to be indifferent to certain forms, and her nature was too independent to rely upon strangers. The journey to Italy had long hovered before her mind; she hoped to return with fresh energy and a portfolio well filled with sketches. The execution of this plan had been delayed, because she wished to find a companion; she might perhaps have procured letters of introduction, but if she did not cultivate these acquaintances, they could be of no use to her, and her time was too valuable to be spent in paying visits and attending parties. By accident she made the acquaintance of Fraulein Stösser, who, as she was an authoress and lived in Weimar, thought a journey to Italy indispensable. Had not Goethe, on that sacred soil, become the prince of poets? The prospect of going to that land of wonders with a kindred soul aroused all her enthusiasm; she declared that she would place herself entirely under Gertrude's guidance and protection—she happened to be several years older than the latter—and in her delight behaved like an artless child.

Both ladies had spent the winter in Rome, and gone

in the spring to Capri, where they arrived about the same time as Walter. Gertrude, half undressed, with her bare arms folded on her breast, leaned motionless against the window, gazing at the bright moonlight, which revealed in the clearest outlines the bare rocky walls of Anacapri. What a magical effect this light must have upon the sea! Unfortunately she had been compelled, from motives of economy, to relinquish her desire to take a room with a more extensive view; her purse would permit no unnecessary expenditures.

Some one knocked softly at the door. Gertrude turned, and frowning, called in by no means the most amiable tone, "Come in!" It must be confessed that her disposition was not invariably sweet, and she did not have much patience with the weaknesses of others; as she troubled no one, she wished no one to disturb her, and often coldly and rudely repelled advances that annoyed her. The door opened gently, and Fraulein Stösser cautiously thrust in a head adorned with sausage-like curls. The figure belonging to the head was wrapped in a dressing-gown, whose yellowish-white tint might be attributed to the want of skill of Italian laundresses; a ruffled petticoat, which had evidently done duty for a week, completed a dishabille which its wearer

considered extremely bewitching. She glided nimbly into the room, closed the door and drew the bolt.

"What a pity that we do not occupy adjoining rooms! I always want to talk to you at night," she said, putting her arm around Gertrude's slender waist.

"I prefer to begin and end the day in silence," replied the other, who never made any response to demonstrations of tenderness.

"You are strong-minded, I know; you fear nothing, and need no one. I, on the contrary, am a poor timid little hare." Fraulein Stösser thought this comparison very pretty, though it was by no means appropriate, since the little hare had long since become a full-grown animal. "I assure you I fairly flew up the stairs and along the corridors; just think, suppose I had suddenly met one of the gentlemen! I should not have known what to do in my confusion. To be surprised in negligé!" She cast a timid glance at her dressing-gown.

Gertrude drew out the last pin that confined her magnificent hair, and the long thick braids fell heavily on her shoulders. "You were unnecessarily troubled; these gay artists are far too indifferent to old maids like ourselves, to consider us worthy of their attention."

"Old maids!" pouted the blonde. "You try to make yourself seem older than you are."

“Not at all; it is only prudence; we must be prepared for old age, then we can await it calmly. A person who tries to cling to her vanishing youth is a sorry spectacle. Believe me, we can not only protect ourselves, but others.”

“Any one who heard you talk, would suppose you were at least fifty years old,” replied Camilla, peevishly.

“Consider what effect it would produce, if you should describe in one of your novels a young girl of thirty or thirty-two summers—you would laugh at it yourself.”

Fraulein Stösser's face assumed a very morose expression; she could lawfully claim the last number of years, with the addition of three, but did not insist upon her rights. She thought it advisable to give the conversation another turn, for Gertrude seemed to be in a particularly bitter, inaccessible mood.

“Can you guess what induced me to come to you at so late an hour?”

“No.”

“How can you be so apathetic? I believe you are interested in nothing but brushes and colors.”

“That is necessary, my dear Camilla, for they are my sole means of support, and I have to provide not only for myself, but my mother.”

"Yet you might sometimes turn your attention to persons and things not directly connected with your profession—but you scarcely trouble yourself about your companions in art."

"Ah! yes I do, when I can learn anything from them."

"Then those who are here probably do not belong to that class?"

"The majority certainly know no more than I."

On some occasions Gertrude surely could not be reproached with overweening modesty.

"The interesting professor is the only person who finds favor in your eyes—Ah! you blush, have I caught you?" Fraulein Stösser clapped her hands with childish delight, and gave her friend an affectionate kiss, expecting that the latter would instantly respond with a detailed description of the state of her heart. But it was not so. To be sure, Gertrude had changed color at the mention of Walter's name, but she quickly repressed the treacherous emotion.

"Pray, Camilla, don't imagine all sorts of foolish things, which are entirely unfounded," she said coldly.

"As I was placed next Herr Erichsen at table, he cannot very well avoid sometimes addressing a few words to

me. If I blushed, it was from annoyance at seeing the most ordinary civility misinterpreted. The professor would be surprised, that his name should be used in connection with that of an old maid artist."

"Don't be so angry; I will say nothing, though you can't forbid my making my own observations," replied the blonde authoress, noticing Gertrude's angry expression; "at any rate you have a rival in this charming, bewitching Baroness Von Valmont, of whom I must talk to you. She has put the whole house in an uproar. Did you notice that all the gentlemen were dressed as carefully as possible at dinner to-day?"

Gertrude nodded, and with a somewhat scornful smile, replied:

"I noticed the unusual excitement, when I returned home. Velvet coats were being beaten and brushed before every door, poor Pietro was rushing wildly from one story to another to satisfy the unusual demand for hot water and well blacked boots. '*Sono tutti matti oggi, i Signori!*' he said to me, because he had received orders to summon the barber at a very uncommon hour.

"All in honor of the baroness! But isn't she a divine creature?"

"I never saw any one like her."

"The creation of some fairy tale. If I were you, I would paint her; you will not find such a model a second time."

"I am sure of that; the color of the hair is incomparable. She would make a wonderful Arethusa, or better still a nixie, with the upper part of her body rising from a mysterious forest lake, illuminated here and there by stray sunbeams, and her marvellous eyes irresistibly alluring into the depths some weary wanderer reclining on the shore. Or as a sprite, dancing in the moonlight in an elfin ring and slaying the foolish knight who ventured into the magic circle, that the crimson rays of dawn might illumine the pale face of a corpse."

"What magnificent pictures they would be, though somewhat horrible! You are really a great artist, Gertrude! Keep those ideas; they will win you a prize at the next exhibition."

"They are not in my line," replied the artist, passing her hand lightly over her brow. "I do not like those Northern fables: they do not speak to my heart; they are bloodless and icy cold, the gloomy fancies of a nation that has ever dwelt under a gray sky. Little Marietta with her donkey is a subject far more attractive to me; that is plain, easily understood truth."

"So the baroness does not please you?" asked Camilla Stösser in surprise.

"How could she help pleasing me? I should have no eyes to fail to appreciate her physical charms. But this is purely external. She has the enviable ease and carelessness of a great lady, who feels that every one must be honored by her notice. We ordinary mortals are often stiff and awkward, merely because we fear our advances may be repelled or considered presumptuous. What there is besides her charming manner, will become apparent on a longer acquaintance with this beautiful woman."

"She has a kind heart, at any rate," Camilla eagerly replied; "she gave Marietta the whole contents of her purse."

"That kind of goodness is not very hard to attain. If the baroness were compelled to renounce any wish for the sake of giving alms, or if one of those gold pieces had been earned by toilsome labor, I would cheerfully acknowledge its merit—now it is merely a good-natured whim."

"Gertrude, I believe you are jealous; although gentleness and indulgence are not prominent traits in your character, I have rarely heard you utter so harsh a judgment."

“Jealous of whom? Why?” asked the artist, in a somewhat tremulous voice, leaning farther out of the window.

“You will not succeed in deceiving me,” replied Fraulein Stösser, rejoiced at having discovered a little womanly weakness in her grave, superior friend. “You must have noticed, as well as I, how often the professor’s eyes wandered towards the table where the baroness sat with her grandfather.”

“Every one likes to watch a beautiful face; my eyes turned in the same direction too.”

“I won’t tease you any longer,” said Fraulein Stösser patronizingly; “for my part I am very well pleased with this acquisition to our party. The gentlemen will now exert themselves more for our entertainment. Did you hear that arrangements had been made for a tarantella to-morrow evening? All the girls on the island, among them the two best dancers, are invited. The baroness was delighted with the idea.”

“Who originated it?”

“The tall artist with the keen, intelligent face—Herr Schulze, whom the others call Mephistopheles.”

“He? Then I am surprised that the baroness accepted the invitation.”

“I am not. The man seemed completely transformed,

so respectful and modest. He appeared to have entirely forgotten his disagreeable habit of staring at ladies, while his lips curled in a contemptuous smile."

"Gentlemen generally adopt different manners towards an aristocratic lady, who travels with a companion and maid, and is the granddaughter of an Excellency. They have a whole scale of gradations in courtesy, which are exactly adapted to the social position of the persons they encounter. We, who work for our daily bread, are treated with a certain kindness as good comrades, and the utmost we obtain is to be spoken of as 'nice girls.' The cream of gallantry is reserved for those who use their delicate hands to do nothing."

"You are bitter, Gertrude," replied Camilla Stösser, who always lived in the happy delusion that she made an irresistible impression on the whole masculine sex.

"As I cannot change the world," continued the artist, "I may at least be permitted to express my dissatisfaction with it. How do you think the Baroness Von Valmont would have been estimated, if she had come here, like myself, with one small trunk, anxiously inquiring the price of board, choosing the cheapest room, without those toilettes whose smallest details show the most studied elegance?"

"Yes, her toilettes!" sighed the authoress. "As she entered the dining-room in that heavy silk dress, mauve she calls the color, she looked like a queen. It is a study in itself to move so easily in such a train. I should catch my feet in it and fall."

Without noticing this interruption, Gertrude continued: "If she had taken her seat at the table in a plain travelling dress, she would have been thought wonderfully pretty and stared at boldly; people would have called her liveliness affectation, and made cautious inquiries about her, to ascertain whether she might not prove an acquaintance they would afterwards be compelled to disown. It would never have occurred to any of the gentlemen to make the slightest change in his manners on her account; all without asking permission would have lighted their cigars and filled the room with smoke; they would neither have lowered their voices nor altered their careless attitudes."

"That almost sounds as if you were envious, Gertrude; a failing I have never perceived in you."

A shadow flitted over the girl's face.

"In a certain sense I do envy those favored by fortune," she answered firmly. "I am well aware that they too are not spared sorrow; but are we either? On the

contrary, it falls on us with double weight, because increased by the anxious fear that tears may paralyze the elasticity, the productive power of our minds, which is indispensable to us, and must under all circumstances be preserved. True, it is said that work is an infallible remedy for a sick soul ; but I think a pleasant journey, change of scene, amusements of various kinds, are still more effectual. 'Adversity ennobles' is a similar axiom, which everybody repeats, because it is convenient to come to terms in this way with our suffering fellow-mortals ; but no one feels any desire to be ennobled at this cost. But go now, Camilla ; that is not meant for you ; you too are a child of fortune, in the possession of a comfortable, assured position."

The elderly young lady had not fully understood the meaning of Gertrude's bitter words, and in particular did not comprehend what connection they had with Baroness Andy Valmont.

"One question more. Do you think it probable that the baroness will marry the professor?"

"How should I know?" replied the artist curtly ; "the cleverest man has some weak point. On whose side the folly would be greatest, that of the professor or the beautiful woman, I cannot predict."

“You are not at all agreeable to-day, Gertrude.”

“Attribute it to my eyes, which have ached very badly for several days,” replied the other, with a melancholy smile. “There you have one of the inconveniences of a life supported by one’s own exertions. The doctor in Rome told me, that I must not use my power of vision for six months, if I wished to preserve it uninjured. I replied, that as I did not possess the blissful confidence of the lilies of the field, I should not fold my hands in my lap; I must fulfil my engagements to the picture-dealers, and had several orders besides.”

“And I hear this now for the first time!” exclaimed Fraulein Stösser reproachfully. “I intreat you to follow the doctor’s advice.”

“It is absolutely impossible—how are my mother and I to live, if I stop working?”

“But suppose you should entirely lose your sight. Think of that terrible possibility.”

“I have already thought of it and chosen a seat for the blind beggar on the Spanish stairs.”

“What a wicked jest! You may be punished for it.”

“We must always be prepared for misfortune.”

“I do not know you to-night; you are in a strangely excited mood.”

"You hear that the pain in my eyes makes me nervous."

"Good night. If I were only back in my room! I shall die of shame if any of the gentlemen see me."

"Then put out your light."

"Still worse. In the dark some insolent fellow might mistake me for a chambermaid, and take some liberty."

"I do not think so. The gentlemen have already learned that the girls here, in spite of their artlessness and trustfulness, are extremely modest."

Camilla lingered on the threshold. "It would be terrible. I could never make up my mind to appear in the dining-room to-morrow."

"I cannot help you, you must brave the danger," said Gertrude in a tone of mingled anger and amusement, pushing her hesitating companion out of the door; "if any one gives you an anonymous kiss, console yourself by thinking it was intended for some one else and therefore does not at all concern you."

"Tease!" cried the blonde, playfully shaking her finger, and glided away—without a light.

She afterwards confessed, with a slight tinge of regret, that nothing had happened, nothing at all; the tall artist had merely opened the door of his room to put out his

boots, when he saw her, he drew back his head with a violent sneeze.

After Gertrude had turned the key and knew that she was once more alone, she went back to the open window. The moon had risen higher, and the white walls and bare rocks glittered in its light. A death-like stillness prevailed; no human voice was audible, nor even the barking of a dog. The wind bore the fragrance of the orange and citron garden to the lonely girl with the stern features, who allowed the cool night-breeze to blow over her bare arms and shoulders. If painting was injurious to her eyes, the tears that fell singly in burning drops from the dark lashes, were still more painful. She was burying no hope, for she had never cherished one. She had never ventured to think that the respectful attention Walter paid her could be transformed into any other feeling. And even if what seemed to her an impossibility had been the case, would it ever have occurred to him to marry an elderly, impoverished girl, who brought him as a dowry the care of providing for an aged mother? Her powers of perception were keen enough to show her that narrow circumstances were unendurable to him. How many men are capable of making sacrifices?

What did the lips, that moved without uttering a word, whisper? "I love him so deeply and warmly that my heart has room for no one else. If he desired it, I would follow him without hesitation to the end of the world, happy in the consciousness of being permitted to love him—remain with him. And when he leaves this island, he will have only a vague memory of a clever girl, with whom he now and then liked to exchange a sensible word. That alluring siren with the golden hair, who is not capable of giving up an ornament for his sake, only needs to stretch out her little white hand, and this man's love will fall into it."

CHAPTER VIII.

IT was amusing to observe what a restless excitement pervaded the minds of all who assembled at the breakfast-table the following morning. Will *she* appear or not? was the question eagerly discussed by the older and younger artists. To-day also they had made unprecedented changes in their outer man. Their cheeks were freshly shaved; their hair was perfumed with oil; the smallest spots of paint were effaced from their coats and the *stirratrice*, driven to despair by continual warning messages, had delivered the clean shirt-collars and cuffs as desired.

Whenever the door of the dining-room opened, every head was turned; and as Pietro, the cameriere, who was somewhat forgetful, ran in and out oftener than was necessary, necks were frequently strained. The padrona put an end to the excitement by replying, in answer to a question from the tall artist, "*La baronessa non scenderà.*" The excitement instantly subsided, and all gave themselves up to the undisturbed enjoyment of their coffee and honey.

Gertrude and Erichsen, who had both finished their breakfast very speedily, met on the terrace before the dining-room.

"You look pale, Fraulein Gertrude," said Walter, cordially shaking her hand; "I am afraid you are working too hard for your strength." Andy's remark that the artist seemed to be interested in him, had affected him pleasantly; flattered vanity whispered, 'the clever girl deserves a friendly greeting.'

"I am here to work," she answered quietly, though she could not prevent the heightened color in her cheeks.

At that very moment the tall artist was saying: "'Pon honor, Fraulein Stade might almost be called a beauty, when she has color. Hers is a marked countenance, a sort of Egyptian type, Rebecca at the well—Heaven knows how she got it on the Luneburg moors."

"Your stay here ought also to afford you some recreation," Walter continued; "throw your brush aside for to-day."

"I cannot, I have a model—and the innocent islanders are already so far advanced in civilization, that they charge the same price as the Roman beauties on the Spanish stairs, a scudo a sitting. Giacenta would in-

stantly give me a most fluent description of the advantageous offers refused on account of her promise to me, and I should be obliged to pay her the full price, whether she sat to me or not."

"Do you paint in your room?"

She nodded. "The background and centre are finished—Giacinta thinks she would recognise the donkey as her own particular *asino* among a thousand; a remark which is very flattering to me, especially as it is the first donkey I ever painted."

"And so you intend to work all day without interruption?"

"Until sunset. We slaves of the palette must take advantage of every ray of light; it seems to me as if the words of the Bible: 'Behold the night cometh when no man can work,' were really spoken for us artists."

"Do you not at least take a short interval of rest?"

"Half an hour is devoted to lunch, and that is sufficient to give new strength. If my model only keeps quiet and understands how to enter into my ideas, it does not fatigue me at all."

"You intended to take a sketch from the Punta di Mitromania; have you given up the plan?"

"No, merely deferred it"—she blushed again—"it seemed indiscreet to intrude upon your solitude."

“You certainly will not disturb me, *Fräulein Gertrude*,” he eagerly replied; “I am convinced that you are too absorbed in your work, to trouble yourself about anything around you. You will trouble me as little as I you. We will work together side by side, like good comrades.”

She bit her lips convulsively—he did not need to tell her that she caused no agitation in his soul, she knew that his interest in her would never advance beyond a certain degree, and that was very far from boiling-point. Would the presence of the elfin creature, now sleeping behind the blinds upstairs, have left him as quiet?

“I thank you,” she answered formally; “I have several pictures to finish before I can venture to make new sketches; by that time you will perhaps already have exchanged your study for the North, and I can then enter without scruple upon the inheritance of your abandoned domain.”

She bowed coldly and disappeared within the house.

Walter looked after her in surprise; there had been a cutting sharpness in her words—she could often develop a very unpleasant, old-maidish acidity.

Late in the afternoon of the same day, Gertrude was sitting before her easel, busily engaged in finishing various little details, which she had only roughly

sketched during the visit of the model. An oppressive, sultry atmosphere pervaded the room, which served as studio, sitting and sleeping apartment. The two windows were partially covered with sheets of pasteboard, to afford the necessary half light.—The sun had poured its burning rays on the albergo all day long, and notwithstanding the thick walls the heat had penetrated the apartment.

Gertrude looked exhausted; her sallow complexion was even paler and more colorless than usual; her eyes were surrounded by dark circles; the corners of her mouth drooped wearily, and from time to time she leaned back, drawing a long breath, passed her hand across her forehead, and after resting in this way a few seconds, worked on with redoubled energy. She had set herself a fixed task, which, whether her physical powers protested or not, must be completed; she had always done this, and smiled compassionately at her companions in the profession, who waited days for the “right mood.”

She had made very tolerable progress, and was already thinking of finishing her day's work, washing her brushes and arranging her simple toilet for dinner, when she heard footsteps and the rustling of a dress outside of her

door. Some one knocked, and Fraulein Stösser's voice asked :

"Are you ready to receive visitors?"

Gertrude rose, palette and brush in hand, opened the door, and said in no very cordial tone :

"What is it, Camilla? You know I don't like to be disturbed in my work."

"Pray don't look so cross," replied her friend, boldly taking possession of the field. "Baroness Valmont wants to see your sketches and pictures before you send them away; she would like to select or order a souvenir of Capri. Here she is herself."

Andy followed close at the speaker's heels. As she entered in her airy dress, whose whiteness was rivalled by her arms and shoulders, and her glittering golden hair, the room suddenly seemed to grow lighter. She greeted Gertrude in the most cordial manner, apologized for her intrusion, and fanning herself with a large palm-leaf fan, sank down into the only arm-chair, exclaiming :

"How warm it is in your room, Fraulein Stade! You can't possibly exist here without ruining your nerves. Why didn't you choose the other wing, where my grandparents lodge? It is less exposed to the sun."

"Because the rooms there cost thrice as much, and I

cannot afford the expense," replied Gertrude, without the slightest embarrassment.

The young widow regretted her thoughtless question ; she had no idea of circumstances in which thirty francs a week played an important part.

"There are some persons who don't feel the heat," she replied ; "you seem to be one of them, since you do not look at all warm."

"I cannot claim that privilege," answered the artist, pushing her hair back from her temples ; "I am a child of the North, and only feel comfortable in a cool temperature."

"In weather like this, I am capable of nothing but being idle ; you must have far more strength of will than I," said Andy, cordially.

"In this case perhaps !"

"Then you give me credit for great self-control in other things?"

Gertrude nodded. "We artists imagine ourselves physiognomists. Delicate and fragile as you look, I would wager that you can be inflexible as iron in certain things, and not even hesitate to sacrifice your dearest wishes, if they do not harmonize with your plan of life. I also think that your elfin form enjoys the most rugged health."

“You are right; I have never been ill, and really do not know what it is to feel fatigue. I can vie with any cavalry officer in riding, and my hand”—she held out the dainty member with its tiny wrist—“can curb the most unruly horse. But you are a dangerous observer, Fraulein Gertrude—will you permit me to call you so?—we must beware of you!”

Meantime Fraulein Stösser had moved the picture higher on the easel, and with the most sincere admiration for the talent of her unassuming friend, enthusiastically exclaimed:

“Look here, madame! Gertrude has surpassed herself this time; none of her Italian subjects have been so successful.”

The picture on the canvas was certainly a most superb bit of Southern life, and Gertrude's almost masculine talent was fully revealed in each bold stroke. The scene was the steep path leading from the Marina to the village of Capri. At a bend in this road on the low wall, sat a young woman, apparently waiting for one of the strangers to hire her and her donkey. Contrary to the custom of the islanders, she wore the white head-dress of the Roman women, against which her dark features stood forth in strong relief. With arms folded

on her breast, her black sparkling eyes gazed intently at the sea, whose dazzling blue gleamed in the sunlight. The classic profile, delicately-formed lips, and the whole bearing expressed wild, tameless pride, and passionate, angry grief. Almost touching her dress, a couple ascended the narrow path—a handsome, curly-headed lad, whose arm encircled the waist of a delicate girl with soft brown eyes. As the path curved at this place, he probably had not noticed the figure sitting on the wall until he was close upon her. His countenance plainly expressed the embarrassment of conscious guilt ; irresolute whether to go on or pause, his eyes rested timidly on the proud face, which was scornfully averted and seemed unconscious of the existence of anything in the world, save the wide sea. His little companion was clinging shyly to him, urging him to quicken his pace, to escape the presence of the dark-eyed girl.

The gradations in the coloring of these three heads were remarkable ; the bronze hue of the young woman's face was admirably adapted to the gloomy sphinx-like character of her beauty. The expression was so clear and strongly marked, that one perceived in this accidental meeting a drama, whose last act had not yet been played ; the convulsively clenched hand of the proud

woman, her nostrils dilated like those of a noble steed, betrayed a fierce wrath, which would soon find relief in some violent expression.

“What a superb face!” cried Andy eagerly; “a queen could not look more majestic. There is something of Medusa’s deadly beauty in those features. The lad, in spite of his boldness and youthful strength, has every reason to steal timidly past her; it would not surprise me if, by a hasty push, she hurled him over the cliff. I understand nothing about art, Fraulein Gertrude, but your picture tells me a story of the hot-blooded children of this country. Has it an owner? If not, I shall most earnestly entreat you to sell it to me.”

“I am sorry I cannot gratify you, madame,” replied Gertrude stiffly. “The picture is already sold; it was ordered by an English family, who left Capri a short time ago.”

“How sorry I am! I have seen nothing so characteristic of Italy! The genre pictures at the art-dealers in Rome always seemed to me mere artist’s models, attired in pretty costumes, that, like worn-out coins, had lost all individuality. What originality your figures display!”

Andy did not exaggerate the impression produced

upon her mind ; she was really surprised to see such an admirable work, for she had not supposed that the silent girl possessed talent so remarkable. Gertrude, who was perhaps wearied, could not sufficiently conquer her prejudice against the baroness to respond to her cordiality. Her sensitive ear fancied a tone of condescension ; it was the aristocratic lady endeavoring to give the poor artist a proof of her powers of judgment. Why should she care whether she was ignored or patronized ? One who accomplished good work and took a practical view of life, could dispense with this favor. She had often learned that people who overwhelmed her with civility in her studio, had scarcely a greeting for her in the drawing-room. She nourished an intense pride in the depths of her soul ; she was conscious of having, with incomparable energy, worked herself up to her present position, and she demanded recognition of it—it was a matter of tolerable indifference whether strangers sympathized with her or not, but every one owed her respect.

Therefore she was almost offended when Andy, without asking permission, placed herself on a familiar footing. As she sat comfortably in her room, which she had just entered for the first time, talking so easily and

frankly, scanning the objects that surrounded her, she showed an unmistakable conviction that there was no place in the whole world where she had not an innate right to remain. The clear, musical voice, the grace of the charming creature, made no impression on the stern, cold North German; she showed her guest the courtesy that civility required, without ever passing the limits of cold formality. She was glad that the picture was sold; she had worked at it with unusual interest, and it would have roused a feeling of annoyance to know that this particular work was in the baroness's possession.

"Was that wonderful head of the young peasant woman produced by your imagination, or does its owner live on this island?" asked Andy.

Fraulein Stösser hastily answered for her friend, whom she was mentally upbraiding for her disagreeable stiffness.

"You can meet the beautiful Giacinta any day, madame; she lives with her old mother in a little house on the Marina. Her whole property is the donkey represented here. The artists are all her devoted admirers, and she could earn a great deal as a model, if she chose; but she is as proud as Lucifer, and a look is enough to rouse her anger. One of the artists wanted to paint her

as Sappho, and of course requested her to put on, instead of her usual dress, a Greek costume, which displayed her neck and arms. The suggestion made her rave like a mad woman, so that even her mother, who always accompanies her when she sits, was frightened. After overwhelming the young man, who had never dreamed of offending her, with a torrent of passionate words, she rushed out of the room, and no promises or entreaties could induce her to cross his threshold again. A short time ago, a stranger wanted to engage her as a guide; during the bargaining about the price his eyes may have rested upon her face with too bold an expression of admiration, for she suddenly threw his money at his feet, exclaiming angrily: 'No one shall look at Giacinta so!' This excessive prudery amused the gentleman, who laughingly answered: 'What have I done? I did not even kiss you.' 'If you had, you would not be alive now!' she is said to have replied, with such a sinister expression in her black eyes that he preferred to seek a gentler guide. Such is Giacinta, and that is her portrait."

"I must make her acquaintance," said Andy, eagerly; "the girl is an embodied volcano; she must have been born near Vesuvius. It will be hard to find a man who will dare to marry her."

"Giacinta says she will never marry," observed Gertrude.

"Then she is an exception among the Italian women, who, I have been told, consider it a misfortune if they reach the age of sixteen without being wedded."

"She has special reasons," said Fraulein Stösser mysteriously, glancing at the picture.

"Pray, Fraulein Gertrude, tell me the previous history of this 'meeting,' as you have laconically christened your work."

The artist hesitated—no man could have resisted Andy's charming animated little face, which expressed the most impatient expectation.

"Gertrude knows all the circumstances, for Giacinta reposes the most unbounded confidence in her, and rejoices that her painted counterpart hurls such a proudly scornful glance at the faithless lover. Whenever she comes, she clinches her fist, shakes it at the lad, and mutters a '*Miserabile! Pezzo d'un birbone, verrà l'ora della vendetta!*' Tell the baroness the unhappy love story."

"I do not know," replied the other irresolutely. "To be sure Giacinta is only a poor, bare-footed girl, but I think she too has some claim to consideration. Where the feel-

ings are concerned, the fisherman's daughter resembles the most aristocratic lady; both weep the same hot tears when they are betrayed."

"Why do you say that in such a defiant tone, Fraulein?" hastily asked Andy, whose keen perceptions nothing escaped, "do you think I doubt your words? The tears burn just as painfully in the eyes of both, only the aristocratic lady wipes hers away with a cambric handkerchief, whose thin texture being easily wet, quickly dries again. I assure you that a deserted chambermaid arouses my sympathy more than a love-sick countess. One must swallow her grief and meantime cook, wash, and obey every command, while the other has a thousand means of mending her broken heart; she can avoid or seek society, fly to the solitude of the mountains, or drown her thoughts amid the tumult of a great city—according to necessity or caprice. Do we not really hold the same opinion?"

Gertrude conquered a slight sense of shame; the baroness had administered a delicate reproof, by showing her that she was not the only person who possessed the privilege of judging independently and justly. After all, it was no crime to occupy a prominent position in society and enjoy the advantages of wealth; those who

really deserved censure were the persons who humbly strewed incense before fortune's favorites. *She* had done the contrary and almost overstepped the limits prescribed by courtesy—it was time to adopt a different course.

“To be sure, it is no secret,” she said more cordially, “every girl will tell you about Giacinta, whom they all fear. So if it would really interest you, madame—”

“One moment!” interrupted Andy turning to Camilla. “Dear Fraulein, I promised grandpapa in your name, that you would accompany him to Tiberius's villa: he is an agreeable old gentleman, as you have already learned, and will consider it a great favor if you consent to be his guide.”

General Von Willberg, His Excellency desired her company!—Fraulein Stösser felt very much honored.

When the little baroness saucily added: “Grandpapa has passed the age when a lonely walk with him could compromise you,” Camilla skipped out of the room, overwhelmed with delight.

CHAPTER IX.

ANDY'S careless manner of disposing of the good-natured girl annoyed Gertrude, who saw in it the arrogance of the privileged caste. Her companion instantly noticed the change in the artist's face.

"Are you angry because I sent Fraulein Stösser away?"

"Yes," replied the other resolutely.

"Why? Is she really your friend? That would greatly surprise me."

"She is not my friend; she is too——"

"Too insignificant—don't be afraid to speak frankly. And why will you not permit me to have the same opinion—or do you think that insignificance is in harmony with my character?"

"In your case it is quite a different quality, that arouses my impatience; your—arrogance."

"There you are mistaken. Fraulein Stösser is a good-natured, comical creature; her zeal to be of use is very convenient, and her pretensions to youth are somewhat ridiculous. I know it flatters her vanity to take a walk

with my grandfather; and I also know that you would not rise an inch in your own estimation if a king or emperor should offer you his arm. It will never occur to any one to dispose of or overlook you—unless he is a great simpleton.”

Oh! weakness of human nature! The strong-minded, sensible Gertrude experienced a secret sense of pleasure in being elevated at the expense of the absent.

“I expect the arrival of a similar person, in a masculine edition, some time during the next few days,” continued Andy, “a Herr Von Linden. Do you know him? No? Well, you have not lost much. I call him the factotum of fashionable society, Figaro quâ, Figaro là! He and Fraulein Stösser might really make a match; they would drive each other to desperation before a year was over, by striving to be mutually agreeable.”

Gertrude smiled—the little elf possessed wonderful knowledge of human nature.

“We are agreed as to the fate of both,” cried Andy, gaily; “and now I should like to hear about Giacinta.”

“You must not expect anything remarkable, madame; it is a simple story, such as happens everywhere, and merely receives its peculiar coloring through Giacinta’s disposition, which is inconceivably fierce and passionate.

The last tiny house on the Marina belongs to her mother, a stupid old woman, over whom she tyrannizes. Her sole property, besides the donkey, is a little boat, the only legacy bequeathed by her father, who was drowned in gathering coral. She rows as well as the most skilful fisherman; her classically formed arms possess muscles of iron, and she knows all the caprices of the sea and wind as well as the most experienced pilot. A simple, half-grown lad, her brother, the only person to whom she never shows her fierce temper, is her assistant. I have often been rowed out by them on quiet evenings, and admired the perfect harmony and regularity of their movements; she only needed to look at the boy, and he instantly understood what she wanted, whether to turn or hoist the sail, steer to the right or left. Last year, just about this season, a young man came to Capri, who as she says was an artist, a *pittore*. In this country they are very lavish in the use of the term *artista*; I imagine he was the son of a small dealer in pictures, of whom there are countless numbers in Italy, who from their business claim the right to be classed among artists. To be sure, they are mere bunglers in our profession, as they provide old pictures with a fresh coat of varnish, or give new paintings the

appearance of old ones. At home they would be called dealers in second-hand articles, which they are, for, besides the pictures, such a shop contains a rich assortment of the rarest ancient things. Paolo was a Sicilian by birth, but his family had lived for many years in Naples. A doubly unfavorable combination: for if the Neapolitans have the reputation of being tricky and unreliable, the Sicilians are the embodiment of treachery and falsehood."

"I was told the very same thing in Rome by a clever young Piedmontese, the nephew of the Minister of Finance," interposed Andy; "'one should always be on his guard with a Neapolitan, and invariably distrust a Sicilian at all times and under all circumstances.' It was the moral of an incident, which was then occupying the attention of all the foreigners in Rome. A Neapolitan duke was betrothed to a German lady, and on the day before the marriage, broke his engagement on the most frivolous pretext. When the lady, dissolved in tears, bewailed her misery to a cardinal by whom the match had been made, the latter is said to have calmly replied: 'Well, well, all Neapolitans seem to be rascals.'"

"Probably the object was gained and the young girl brought over to the Catholic church," said Gertrude,

whose quick intelligence instantly penetrated to the kernel of the whole affair.

“I think I did hear something of the kind,” carelessly replied the little baroness, who was very little interested in political or religious questions. “But pray go on.”

“Paolo, the so-called *pittore*, spent several weeks at Capri, perhaps in order to purchase a few pictures from the artists who spent the summer here. He made Giacinta’s acquaintance during the first few days, and her remarkable beauty—a year ago her features are said to have been much more soft and winning—instantly inflamed his Southern heart. He himself was also a handsome fellow, his delicate dark face reminding one of the Arabian type, which is often found in Sicily. The girl had always remained haughtily aloof from the other peasants; the artists had so often told her she looked like a queen, that she thought herself reserved for some distinguished lot. As she would not have held out the tips of her fingers to a man, if he had not distinctly expressed his intention to marry her—the Italians in this respect have a cold-hearted caution, which forms the most striking contrast to their glowing eyes—Paolo swore that he would make her his wife,

“He would be obliged to write and ask the consent of his father, on whom he was entirely dependent. Giacinta’s beauty, virtues, industry and skill were praised in the highest terms. True, she could not read the words, but she carried the open letter to the priest, who read it slowly aloud, that she might be convinced Paolo was not deceiving her. The answer was long delayed, at least Paolo asserted he had received none; his love grew more and more ardent, and she allowed herself to be persuaded to consider him her *sposo* and appear in public leaning on his arm. When week after week elapsed and she could give no reply to her friends’ inquiries, when she was to be married and go to Naples, the passionate violence of her character burst forth, and she told Paolo that if he did not request the priest to perform the ceremony the following Sunday, some misfortune would happen. She did not tell me what she meant by the remark, but I think she would not have hesitated to thrust a dagger into his heart.

“Probably the Sicilian, on closer acquaintance, had found his betrothed bride somewhat formidable. A man could never be sure of his life with such a woman; she already showed the wildest jealousy if he even looked at any other girl. She was so thoroughly imbued with

the consciousness of her own faultless beauty, that she thought the man to whom she gave herself, ought no longer to have eyes for any one else.

“ Paolo obeyed her imperious command, and summoned the priest to perform the ceremony. This step soothed Giacinta’s suspicions, and she permitted her lover to go to Naples to purchase her bridal finery; Paolo solemnly promised to return at the end of two days—as you may suppose, he did not come.

At first Giacinta behaved very sensibly; it was possible that he had been detained in Naples, that his parents would not suffer him to return at once; but when the last day of the week approached and no news of the faithless one arrived, she almost went mad.

“ Marietta told me she rushed up and down the shore like an infuriated panther; every boat might bring him! Then, until far into the night, she sat motionless on a rock, her arms clasped around her knees, and her idiotic brother beside her, gazing steadily out upon the sea. The expression of her face was so gloomy and threatening that all timidly kept aloof. After she had vainly waited a week, she went to Naples, attired in her best clothes, adorned with pearls and corals; and to show that she was a respectable girl, took with her her mother, who understood very little of what had occurred.

“She had not forgotten the address of Paolo’s father, and, after many questions, found the little shop. You must hear her tell the story herself, madame,” said Gertrude. “I cannot utter the words with her inimitable pathos. ‘*Sono io la Giacinta!*’ With these haughty words she introduced herself to the old picture-dealer, who was just busied in dusting his wares. The latter, a peevish, deaf old man, merely glanced at her and continued his work. After a few minutes, as she still stood motionless in the same defiant attitude, he turned and exclaimed, in a shrill tone: ‘*Fuori!* Go away! I want no model.’ ‘I am not a model; I am your daughter-in-law,’ she answered, in a dignified tone. ‘Daughter-in-law!’ screamed the old man, who instantly perceived the state of affairs, furiously flourishing his duster in her face; ‘you are mad.’

“‘Your son Paolo promised to make me his wife.’ ‘Then he has promised more than he can perform. He has been betrothed for years to the daughter of one of my friends; we fathers have settled the matter.’ ‘I will not permit it,’ cried Giacinta, becoming enraged in her turn; ‘he belongs to me! he must marry me!’ ‘What?’ replied the old man, ‘I suppose you are the girl at Capri, about whom he wrote that foolish letter? Listen, *poveretta*,

return to your island at once and marry some fisherman or goat-herd, who is a suitable match for you! Is it possible that you can expect the son of a distinguished family, that has numbered a *podestà* among its ancestors, to marry a bare-footed beggar? And are you not ashamed to run after a young man? In my time, the lads followed the girls. '*Dio mio, che impudenza!* Away with you!' He turned and continued his dusting. But Giacinta did not easily allow herself to be driven from the field. She loaded the old man with abuse, and called down every possible misfortune on his bald head. This did not disturb him in the least; accustomed to the frantic gestures of women, one more or less made very little impression upon him. But when she threatened to break his costly goods into a thousand pieces, he grew angry, seized her with an iron hand, beneath which even her strength was powerless, pressed her down into a chair, and shaking the duster under her nose so violently that she began to cough and sneeze, hissed: 'Now keep quiet, my beauty, or I will call my good friend, the police officer, and have you dragged away as a shameless hussy. *Capito?* Paolo has nothing to do with the matter; he obeyed me, from whom he receives every soldo he puts in his pocket. He isn't here.' 'Not

here?' cried Giacinta; 'will you swear it?' 'I swear it; I sent him away because I thought you would come here some day. He is in Rome, in a large shop—much larger than mine.' Here he cast a proud glance at his worm-eaten mouldy treasures. 'He will marry his employer's daughter, and become his father-in-law's partner. It is no use for you to stare at me like a blood-thirsty tiger. Paolo has escaped you; you will never see him again.' 'He is in Rome, do you say?' cried the girl, who could scarcely breathe under the pressure of his hand. 'I will find him; rely upon it! Giacinta can wait patiently when revenge is in view.'

"These words made no impression on the old picture-dealer; the pathetic, passionate Italian rarely fails to produce its effect on foreigners, but the natives of the country, who daily use and hear it, attribute no great importance to such threats. '*Va bene, va bene!*' replied the father of the faithless lover; 'Rome is wide, and woman's anger a fire that soon dies out. You can do as you choose later, *cara mia*, but at present I only wish you to leave my shop as soon as possible; customers might come who wanted to buy something, and you would be in my way, child, for you stand there like a thunder-cloud just ready to burst.' 'You will hear more of

Giacinta than will be agreeable to you,' she replied with a look of fierce hatred, and went away with her mother, who had been a tolerably indifferent spectator.

"The return to Capri was a bitter cup for her to drain. Of course she was teased and mocked, because after refusing many a worthy fellow—according to the ideas that prevail here, she is no longer a young girl at twenty—she had allowed herself to be deceived by a stranger. There were all sorts of malicious tales, but without foundation; *before* marriage an Italian woman rarely makes a false step, especially one like Giacinta, who, in spite of her passionate temperament, is incapable of love or devotion. She soon silenced the evil tongues, carried her head higher than ever, shut her grief and rage within her own heart, and behaved as if nothing had happened and there had been no change in her situation."

"And has she seen her former lover? Has she revenged herself on him?" asked Andy.

"No, I am afraid she is reserving her vengeance," replied Gertrude gravely. "She really has remarkable strength of soul, and is capable of making a plan and executing it with great deliberation. She is now trying to obtain money to defray the expenses of a journey to Rome. While I was painting her, she made

the most minute inquiries about the city, and asked me in what way she could best earn her living there. A girl with her beauty might obtain a high price as a model, since good models are beginning to be as rare in Rome as elsewhere; but she is not fit for that business, she runs away without the least hesitation in the middle of a sitting, if she fancies herself insulted. She indignantly rejected my proposal that she should enter some family as a servant; she considers herself far above such a position, like most of the girls of this strange island—besides, I should pity those whose house she entered. All the crockery would be shattered in pieces at the first misunderstanding.”

The little baroness, who had been leaning so far back in the arm-chair that her slight figure almost disappeared in the cloud of white muslin floating around her, laughed merrily.

“Medea in the kitchen!” she exclaimed; “destroying pots and pans!”

The artist smiled. “Yet she does not shrink from any labor; if she finds nothing else to do, she carries stones for the road that is being built at Anacapri. During the season that strangers visit the island, she never fails to earn a great deal of money; with her antique head and

noble bearing she attracts every one's attention when she sits on the low wall. I was fairly bewitched the first time I saw her, and the idea of this picture occurred to my mind even before I knew her story."

"Do you really think she has not given up her revenge?"

"I do, and have already endeavored to inspire her with gentler feelings. The picture, whose progress she watched with great interest, afforded me a pretext. When she again gave vent to her anger, I told her that if she met Paolo, she ought to follow the example of her portrait, which merely had a contemptuous glance for the faithless lover, who crossed her path with another on his arm. 'What would he care for my scorn?' she cried angrily, 'he would sleep none the worse and eat with no less appetite. If I should ever meet him in the way you have painted there, I should know that he would not take that path a second time.'"

"What strange mortals!" said Andy, looking at her rosy nails; "I am beginning to pity poor Paolo. After all, his crime is not so great. He fell in love with the beautiful girl, as I, had I been a man, should have done in his place, and his circumstances forbade him to marry—that is all."

“Not quite, madame,” replied Gertrude, gravely; “you forget that he was betrothed, bound to another, when he asked for Giacinta’s hand. It was the deception for which, with good reason, she reproaches him, for she is too proud and honest ever to deviate from the truth. If he had confessed the real state of affairs, she would have kept aloof from him, no matter at what cost.”

“You have only heard the girl’s story,” cried Andy, with a certain degree of irritation in her tone; “the lad is perhaps no less to be pitied; he may have obeyed with reluctance, and received the bride forced upon him without love. What was he to do?”

“Make a frank confession.”

“But he loved Giacinta, and she would then have turned away from him.”

“Of course, but he would not have lied, and she would not have felt herself humiliated.”

“How stupid and tiresome the world would be, if we always acted according to the strict principles of right! Poets call love an intoxication, an innocent madness, which fully expresses its fleeting, transitory character. Do you admire a girl who says, ‘I will love you, provided that you can make me a doctor’s wife, a countess, etc.’? No, no; it is far better for people to treat each

other as good friends ; then we part with regret and meet with joy ; we put on the holiday garments of the soul—gayety and amiability. As we do not see each other constantly, we have no opportunity to discover faults and bad habits, and when we proceed on the journey of life, each enters his own carriage, and though we probably shed tears, the memory of bright, unclouded days remains and helps us to endure the sorrow of parting.”

“Would it then be so terrible to you to continue the journey with the ‘good friend?’ ” asked Gertrude.

Andy folded her arms, and with a droll expression of deliberation, answered : “ My dear Fraulein, fate never gives us for a *compagnon de route* one whose society would make the journey a pleasure. We must be satisfied with having talked a few hours pleasantly away at the station. We can twist and turn as we like, but in the end we are all the slaves of circumstances.”

“ He who is independent——” Gertrude began.

“ Who *is* independent?” cried the young widow, impatiently. “ Good Heavens ! on what trifles do we not depend ! To begin at the lowest round : on the shoemaker, who either gives us ill-fitting boots or none at all”—she could not help laughing, for the remembrance

of her first love, the tutor with the elephant feet, involuntarily occurred to her mind—"on the tailor, the dress-maker, our servants, our parents, our education, the man whom we love or do not love, the world, and last but not least, the wretched self, which is nevertheless so valuable! As I sit here before you, you undoubtedly suppose that I allow myself to be guided solely by the suggestions of a capricious fancy, and yet a heavy chain clings to my foot—only you do not hear it rattle——"

She buried her white teeth in her pouting lips. Gertrude's eyes rested upon her with a shade of sympathy: the variable creature, surrounded by the attributes of elegance and luxury—the costly turquoise buttons and buckle that clasped her belt would have swallowed the whole of the artist's yearly income—formed a striking contrast to her own grave, severe simplicity.

"You are defending mere sophisms, madame," she answered, firmly; "no one is free in the sense of being bound by no considerations; but we can preserve the freedom of the soul by emancipating ourselves from fancied necessities. I have passed through a different school from yours, and the result of my lessons is that I prefer to live in a garret and practise miracles of economy, rather than marry from purely utilitarian

motives—for that is the secret thought, which you, perhaps unconsciously, cherish.”

The little baroness blushed, and throwing herself carelessly back in her arm-chair, replied: “Fraulein Gertrude, it seems to me that you have a remarkably solid character.”

“Solid is the courteous term for stupid and tiresome,” replied the other, with a touch of good-natured amusement.

“That was not my meaning,” replied Andy; “but when I endeavor to think and talk sensibly, I always end by committing all sorts of follies. Have you seen Professor Erichsen to-day?” she asked suddenly, fixing her sparkling eyes, which glittered with an emerald-green light, on the tall, slender girl in her loose brown dress. A deep flush crimsoned Gertrude’s sallow cheeks.

“A moment at breakfast.”

“How do you like him?”

“That is hard to say,” replied the artist, coldly. This inquisitorial manner annoyed her, and she endeavored to conceal her interest under an air of studied indifference. “The professor only shows a portion of his character when conversing with strangers.”

“Indeed? I never noticed that.”

“Probably because, in your society, his mind always regains the elasticity which is often absent. He works hard, and the constant mental toil may produce a fatiguing effect upon him. That is the way I interpret his reluctance to enter into any lengthy conversation; he is always cordial and attentive, but we feel annoyed when men of his stamp intrench themselves behind social forms, which are only intended to make frivolity more endurable.”

“You judge him severely.”

“No, indeed,” replied Gertrude, eagerly. “I cannot express myself in the enthusiastic terms used by Fraulein Stösser, who is constantly endeavoring to strike new sparks out of him—greatly to his discomfort. He takes a friendly interest in my art; we often exchange a remark about this or that addition to the number of guests at table; he gives me general news from our native country—farther our relations do not extend. Of liking or acquaintanceship there can hardly be a question.”

“Indeed”—the baroness had risen and now cast one more glance at the picture on the easel. “So it is sold?” she asked. “You would not be willing to paint a second one?”

“I can accept no commissions at present, I have too many orders.”

“What a pity!”

Andy had opened a portfolio and was turning over the sketches it contained. In the Roman studios, which more or less resembled shops, whose wares were displayed for the selection of every purchaser, she had followed the example of others, who left no portfolio, no sketch unexamined, and if possible subjected the palette and brushes to a close scrutiny. She did not suspect what a painful feeling she aroused in the mind of Gertrude, who had never permitted any one to ransack her portfolio, which formed a sort of journal.

“Oh!” exclaimed the baroness in surprise, taking out a sheet of paper and approaching the window—“isn’t this an admirable likeness of Walter—the professor? How perfect, in spite of the few careless strokes!”

“A study I sketched in Paris,” replied Gertrude, compressing her lips.

“Very imprudent in this ‘study’ to look so amazingly like a gentleman of your acquaintance! Will you let me have the drawing?”

“I am very sorry to be compelled to refuse another request—but ask my companions in the profession—we never permit studies to pass out of our hands, because we always need them.”

“How bold and powerful! You have reproduced in a most masterly manner the expression of repose, that is so attractive because it does not arise from a phlegmatic temperament, but a wonderful power of self-control. The hair is somewhat idealized; the original would disown those waving locks. You have omitted the beard—greatly to the improvement of the whole; the delicate, noble lines of the mouth are more distinctly visible.”

“I repeat, madame, that I made the study in Paris.”

“I don’t doubt it,” said Andy, replacing the sheet in the portfolio. Then looking at her watch, she exclaimed: “Six o’clock already! Pardon me for having detained you so long—you have still your dress to change. I hope we shall see each other often; as we are under the same roof, there will be no difficulty in doing so.”

Andy laid her soft white fingers, with their rosy nails, in the artist’s thin brown hand.

“Did you ever read the memoirs of the Marquise de Crêqui?” she asked, turning on the threshold. “As you have lived a long time in France and understand the language perfectly, I suppose you have a thorough knowledge of the literature of the country.”

Gertrude answered in the negative.

"I can lend you the books, I own a copy. They are written in an amusing style, interspersed with remarkably subtle observations, which show keen insight and mature philosophy. So the charming old marquise says in one passage, where she speaks of a friend who concealed in her heart a love which she was unwilling to confess, and therefore spoke of its object with feigned indifference: *L'object de nos amours n'est pas toujours celui, dont nous parlons le mieux, mais toujours celui, dont nous parlons le plus* (The object of our love is not always he whom we praise, but invariably he of whom we say most). In those days ladies did not draw and paint."

With these words the elf vanished, and Gertrude fancied she heard her mocking laugh in the corridor. She was so taken by surprise, that she could find no reply, and stood gazing at the door, through which the charming little creature with the red gold curls had glided. What did this visit mean? Was it a reconnaissance? Did the baroness do her the honor of thinking her a rival and being jealous of her? Gertrude's lips were distorted with an expression of pain, as in removing her brown blouse she saw her own grave, dark features reflected in the glass, that had just mirrored the flushed charming face, the piquante beauty of the baroness.

As she took her plain black cashmere dress from the chest of drawers, her foot struck against some object ; she stooped—it was a broad, thick, dead gold band, heavy and massive as a fetter ; the clasp was a medallion of turquoises, surmounted by a coronet, whose nine points were outlined in diamonds. The little baroness had heedlessly lost the valuable ornament ; she probably possessed such a quantity of costly bracelets that she scarcely missed one. Gertrude admired the artistic execution, and pressed the medallion, whose lid sprang open, revealing a photograph—the likeness of a handsome young man in uniform. A faultlessly beautiful head, but only beautiful in the lines and contours. On looking at the face more closely, one perceived a mindless, vacant, almost coarse expression. She remembered the picture galleries in old castles, whose long rows of family portraits had made the same impression upon her. At first, the features of the mailed knight, rude as if they had been hewn by a battle-axe ; then, as generation after generation followed, they became refined and moulded into a regular aristocratic type, in which, however, a keen eye recognised the original foundation. She could easily imagine the handsome officer to be the descendant of a groom.

Her thoughts lingered over the portrait—who could it be? The count's coronet also aroused her wonder; so far as she was aware, that of the baroness had but seven points—how strange that a jewel belonging to her should have an ornament that was not appropriate!—Perhaps it was an heirloom; yet it was new, and the style as modern as if it had just left the shop of some Parisian jeweller. What did it matter? Gertrude slipped the bracelet into her pocket, to return it to the baroness at dinner.

CHAPTER X.

THERE was an unusual activity among the artists, who were constant guests at the albergo. As the little baroness had accepted, with a most gracious bend of her beautiful head, their proposal to get up a national tarentella in her honor, they were endeavoring to give the festival the greatest possible air of originality. The tall artist, nicknamed Mephistopheles—his real cognomen was William Schulze, but he was always called Mr. William for short—developed a most luxuriant imagination in devising paper-lanterns to adorn the hall and veranda. With the aid of oil-paper, wire and glue, tulips, lilies and roses appeared under his skilful fingers, to say nothing of butterflies, which produced a very remarkable effect when fastened among the boughs of blooming orange trees. A fat, good-natured young fellow, a native of Mecklenburg, who, when angered, spoke most palpable low German, had composed a painting on a transparency, a dance of the elves—an allusion to the graceful golden-haired queen of the festival—

which, surrounded by cypress and laurel trees, was to occupy the end of the hall, and whose effect was still farther heightened by a wonderfully natural artificial moon, which was to be reflected in the water. The elves were dancing on the edge of a pond.

“Worthy of a court theatre!” said the creator of the satellite of the earth, also a German, and a landscape-painter, whose talent consisted principally in effects of light. He was called Endymion, on account of his fair hair and dreamy eyes.

Endymion had good reason to be grateful to our Heavenly Father for creating the lesser light that rules the night. No American or English family left Rome without taking with them one of his famous moonlight landscapes. A ruined arch of the Aqueduct, standing alone in the Campagna, illumined by the weird rays of the moon, formed the infinitely varied subject of his pictures. Mephistopheles declared that if all the arches his hand had placed on canvas could be joined together, they would form an aqueduct reaching to the Lago di Bracciano. Endymion used to accept such jests with a resigned smile; he painted the same thing year in and year out, and throve admirably upon it.

He, Willam Schulze, and Uncle Bräsig, of Mecklen-

burg, the most useful members of the artist's club when the point in question was to adorn a Christmas tree or arrange tableaux, had united to beautify the present entertainment by their talents. The easels were pushed aside, and the only work accomplished was that of making decorations. The three friends, clad in tolerably airy costumes, sat in a large room which they had fitted up as a studio, joyfully contemplating the work of their hands, which was approaching completion. Mephistopheles had made such lavish use of the brightest colors in manufacturing his butterflies, that he had soon exhausted his store. Two huge wings lay before him waiting to be painted; they lacked carmine and indigo-blue. All the color-boxes had already been searched in vain.

"Shall we send to the French artists at Pagano and borrow from them?" he asked, looking sorrowfully at the colorless butterflies.

"Impossible!" cried Uncle Bräsigg; "they would instantly bristle up and take it as a proof, that *la grande nation* had regained its old superiority. Since Monsieur Hébert closed the door of the French Academy in the Villa Medici in our faces, all intercourse between French and German artists has ceased."

"Yes," observed Endymion, with the enthusiastic expression bestowed upon him by nature—he was really a very jovial fellow—"even the peaceful island has divided itself into two hostile camps. The French have their headquarters at Pagano; we at the Albergo Nazionale."

"Jealousy extends even to the models," said Uncle Bräsig, a skilful painter of figures; "fortunately we have obtained Giacinta; and Mephistopheles gave her such a horrible description of the lack of morality among the French, that the prudish beauty would refuse their most tempting offers."

"That is the revenge on Monsieur Hébert for enviously concealing his famous model in Rome," observed Endymion.

"But I need carmine and indigo-blue," sighed the tall artist, in a lugubrious voice.

"Perhaps Fraulein Stösser can undertake to mediate," suggested the moonlight painter; "I saw her not long ago engaged in an animated conversation with a Frenchman."

"What? She has communication with the enemy's camp," cried William, starting up; "that deserves punishment. She must instantly be summoned to answer for it."

He opened the door and called to Pietro, the long-suffering cameriere, whom he ordered to go at once to the signora, whose room was on the same corridor, and beg her to come to the studio, where the gentlemen needed her counsel.

"Good heavens, William," said Endymion, in an embarrassed tone; "consider our toilets—we cannot receive any lady *so*."

"Shirt-sleeves!" grumbled Uncle Bräsigg; "I should like to know what there is unsuitable in that. We should do better to take off everything in this heat."

"Propriety will be maintained," said Schulze, striding into the adjoining room, from which he brought a huge white umbrella. He cautiously opened the door—"Hush! I hear Fraulein Stösser coming upstairs; Pietro, worthy fellow, is delivering his message. Does he want to speak to me, me? he parodied. But she has the heart of a dove, and expects nothing wrong from us."

"Strangely enough," observed Endymion, "for you have already played her many a trick."

The tall artist's sharp, mobile features twitched with secret amusement. "I have a bright idea in my head. I'll tell you about it later; the little baroness is an accomplice."

“Well, that *is* making rapid progress,” said Uncle Bräsig, phlegmatically; “introduced to her yesterday and having mutual secrets to-day.”

“Hush! Her dainty fingers rap.”

William Schulze opened the umbrella, which he held before him like a shield, so that his figure was almost entirely concealed. “Honored Fraulein,” he whispered, in the gentlest tones, through the crack in the door, “pardon the liberty my friends and I have taken in requesting your charming presence——”

“Herr Schulze!”

“Don’t call me Schulze—my ear is sensitive on that point; say Wilhelm, or still better William—don’t you think it sounds prettier?”

Fraulein Stösser uttered a little girlish laugh, and wondered why the artist did not open the door wider. “Well, then, Mr. William, what do you want?”

“In the first place, that you should enter our studio, the work-shop of German artists, who not unworthily represent their native land.”

“As I can’t slip through the key-hole, I don’t know how I am to accomplish it, if you keep the door shut.”

“Very true—very cleverly remarked,” replied the tall artist, admiringly; “there is only one obstacle—we are

not in dress-coats, Fraulein Camilla—a charming name, Fraulein, an, I might say, aromatic name. We have been working since sunrise, in order to arrange a brilliant festival in honor of your charming friend, and are therefore in mechanic's costume—we are without coats."

"Or gowns," remarked Uncle Bräsigg.

"Don't be alarmed, honored Fraulein; my foresight has provided for everything—here, take this umbrella; arm yourself with it; you can boldly cross the threshold behind its protecting screen; it will be the Spanish wall of etiquette, behind which you can hold intercourse with us."

"Thanks," laughed the fair-haired lady; "under these circumstances I prefer to treat with you through the door."

"Pyramus and Thisbe!" cried Schulze, in impassioned tones, hastily closing the umbrella. "As you choose. May I be permitted to offer you a chair?"

"No."

"I am your obedient slave. Can you keep a secret, Fraulein Camilla? But what a superfluous question! I know you are an exception to your loquacious sex. When Coriolanus says to his wife, 'My dear silence!' it always seemed to me one of the boldest hyperboles of Shakspeare—since I have known you——"

Here Uncle Bräsig uttered a sort of grunt, while Endymion was writhing convulsively in the effort to repress a loud laugh. William Schulze continued: "Promise not to betray any of our preparations at dinner, even if the irresistible baroness should besiege you with coaxing words—give me your hand upon it, Fraulein Camilla."

He thrust his arm through the crack and seizing the authoress's hand, kissed it, which homage induced the blonde to withdraw it with a deep blush. Herr Schulze could be very agreeable when he chose. Endymion, who could scarcely control his mirth, uttered a sobbing sound.

"My friend has sighed a great deal of late," whispered Mephistopheles significantly, "and I don't know why. Haven't you noticed that he has seemed very melancholy?"

"If you don't tell Fraulein Stösser our business soon, William, I'll do it myself; time is passing and we must have the colors."

"I believe you envy my rôle of speaker, Uncle Bräsig—he is inclined to be jealous Fraulein Camilla, a Mecklenburg Othello, his phlegm is only a mask, beneath which is a volcano of passionate feeling. Pardon this

digression, I rarely have the pleasure of talking with you ; you are always so surrounded, that in your presence I scarcely dare——."

Fraulein Stösser was not foolish enough to take all this for pure gold, but it tickled her vanity to have the most intelligent and amusing of the artists occupy himself with her. "You have a commission, Mr. William?"

"Yes! We have prepared some wonderfully poetical decorations, from which we expect the most incredible results; every one is to be surprised except ourselves, the creators; no one suspects what we plan; imagine, butterflies—transparent butterflies, fluttering around orange trees——" he murmured, "can your imagination dream of anything more poetic?"

"Enchanting!" she murmured behind the door, "I should not have expected such dainty conceits from you."

"I am afraid you have always intentionally misunderstood me," he answered in an agitated tone, "I have a gentle nature, my dear Fraulein, although my tongue is often somewhat sharp——" Then assuming a natural tone: "Some of these butterflies still lack their gay colors, because we have not the necessary paints. None of our companions in art, who are scattered over the most distant portions of the island, can help us. We

thought of borrowing carmine and indigo from the French painters, but our national pride rebels against it. I was told by my friend Endymion—he is sighing again, poor fellow—that you associated with them. Oh! Fraulein Camilla, you coldly reject the timid homage of a German youth and open your ears to the deceitful flatteries of a foreign tongue! A fair-haired German maiden throwing herself into the arms of a Frenchman!"

He shook his head reproachfully, and his long nose seemed to droop in a most melancholy fashion.

"Good heavens, Herr Schulze——"

"William, if you please, I prefer it."

"The French artist who often accosts me, is the brother of one of my friends, now a governess in a Roman family; I made his acquaintance through her, he brought me a letter," cried Camilla, eagerly defending herself.

"That is the way such things always begin," said the tall artist gloomily. "A friend's brother—oftentimes a cousin," he added, as if lost in thought. "I have no right to intrude upon your secrets, Fraulein Camilla—no right whatever. But the end sanctifies the means! Write a few lines to the French artist, and ask him for the colors. Pietro will carry the note to Pagano. You

hear, Endymion, it is only a friend's brother ; the whole affair is perfectly natural. I must soothe the poor fellow," he whispered confidentially. "Yes, be kind enough to ask for carmine. I hope the frivolous Frenchman won't suppose that you have other uses for that color. The Parisians rouge, to be sure, but nature paints the cheeks and lips of German maids and matrons. Will you do us the favor, Fraulein?"

"You may be sure of my willingness to oblige," replied the authoress, in an embarrassed tone; "but I should not like to write to Monsieur Chappuis. It might be misunderstood," stammered the young lady of thirty-five, who distrusted her skill in French orthography.

"Girlish timidity — perfectly natural," said William Schulze, nodding.

"But I think I can gratify your wish in another way. I believe Fraulein Stade has a large stock of these colors."

"Make haste, dear Fraulein; that would be the shortest way! I never thought of our sister of the palette."

"Gertrude is very peculiar about her property. If she refuses the request——"

"Tell her that if the steamer does not arrive to-

morrow, I will swim or ride a dolphin to Naples, in order to replace the loan with usury."

In his zeal, he threw the door wide open, and Fraulein Stösser fled with a shriek as she saw the long, lank figure in shirt-sleeves.

"Pardon! pardon! Where is the umbrella—the Spanish wall that covers me?" he cried despairingly.

Then he threw himself into a chair, put his feet on the table, and burst into a fit of mad laughter, in which the two others cordially seconded him.

"But," said Endymion, when the storm had partially subsided, "I forbid you to drag me into your jests. That woman is firmly convinced that she is the object of my secret affection."

"I allowed it to be seen that our worthy Uncle Bräsig is your rival."

"She will soon be undeceived in that respect," muttered the latter.

"What would you have? I assure you, Endymion, you couldn't do better than to marry the lady. She has money, and is by no means bad looking. If you make her drink mineral water, the redness that now disfigures her complexion will soon disappear. You must make her cease composing, and allow her to use pens and

paper only for keeping household accounts. If I were not principled against marriage, I would take her myself. She will make a neat, thorough housekeeper."

"If I should be compelled to give up my bachelor life while at Capri, I would prefer Fraulein Stade."

"By no means bad taste; to the eye of a connoisseur she is a beauty. If she would do nothing for a year but drink beer and sleep, she would be as blooming as a rose; she is working herself thin and yellow."

"If she had Fraulein Stösser's money——" said Endymion, with his enthusiastic glance.

"That she certainly has not," rejoined Uncle Bräsig; "she is as poor as Job! But she has a great deal of talent, which every year finds increasing recognition."

"She will not be easy to win; rely upon my knowledge of human nature," said the tall artist, "with all her reserve and apparent modesty, she sets a high value upon herself. I have discovered that she is not indifferent to the professor."

"Erichsen!" cried Endymion, "the enviable man whom the baroness favors."

"A proof of her good sense; although I would be willing to wager she has never put her little nose into one of his books. An uncommonly clever head! When,

a short time ago, I stood in the Museo Borbonico, before the magnificent bust of Scipio, I was vividly reminded of his masterly biography of the great general, of whom he said in one passage: 'He conquered a world, and in so doing believed he was only fulfilling a simple duty.' One must have seen the noble, dignified head, to appreciate the truth of this expression. Erichsen does not make a marked impression at first, but proves to be a very attractive man. Great ambition, vast power of self-control, and concealed beneath it, a nature longing for love—the masculine pendant to Fraulein Stade, our hyper-sensible colleague, who certainly has no cause to reproach herself for having ever been over-hasty. On account of this very similarity in character, I should doubt whether she would make any deeper impression on the professor. Opposite poles attract; our slender, sensitive Endymion, for instance, feels enchained by Fraulein Stösser's corpulent charms."

"These tasteless jokes!" cried the other furiously.

"She writes; he never reads anything except the wine-card," continued William Schulze, without permitting himself to be at all disturbed; "one could scarcely find a more harmonious couple."

Endymion shrugged his shoulders; he knew his

friend, whose satirical humor, when once roused, was not to be suppressed.

“Has any one seen the baroness to-day?” he asked.

“I have,” replied Schulze; “she was gracious enough to receive me on the terrace, where her maid had arranged a Turkish couch of wraps and cushions. She stretched herself in the sun and blinked like a kitten. Marietta sat at her feet and sang an endless number of songs. The general was nodding over an old newspaper. Her ladyship was tired, and condescended to allow me to amuse her for half an hour—that is, she skilfully asked questions and I replied. As she drew her long curls over her face, and her eyes sparkled saucily, while her teeth glittered when she laughed, the temptation to kiss her was very strong. Be on your guard, Endymion! she is a fiend direct from the infernal regions, and would allure Saint Anthony himself.”

‘She seems to have already succeeded with you,’ muttered Uncle Bräsig.

“I am a hardened sinner,” replied William Schulze, carelessly stretching his legs farther over the table, “but I must confess that it requires a confoundedly clear head not to become a fool in her presence. Besides, I would take my oath that she is secretly laughing at us all, not

excepting the professor; some fine prince will soon appear and carry her off in a chariot of clouds. As, in spite of my enthusiasm, I never neglect the practical, I have begged her to sit for me, to which she graciously consented. Such fascinating, changeful eyes hovered before me as I began to sketch my mermaid, I hope I may be able to catch the mysterious, demoniacal expression."

"They say that she would marry the professor," observed Endymion.

"She, artless boy! Do you really think so?" laughed Schulze. "She would become Frau Erichsen and help her husband read proof sheets, when there were no stockings to be darned?"

"If she loves him——"

"Loving and marrying are two different things; in marriage similar habits of life turn the scale. A woman, who had been a maid-servant, would incommode me horribly, but I should be equally under restraint with a duchess, who from motives of generosity, had condescended to give me her hand. Providence has quite another plan for the little baroness than to make her a good housekeeper, who would give her husband a dozen children. She is here to stir our sluggish blood, to delight us with this incarnation of grace and mischief.

She belongs in a certain sense to all who have eyes for beauty and poesy—no one must seek to impose chains upon her—she cannot endure them.”

“Hark ye, William,” said Uncle Bräsigg, dryly; “it seems to me you are already on fire. I demand that the sittings shall be given in our general studio, or some misfortune will happen. She will either, in despair, throw herself into the sea, or die some other unnatural death, while you’ll swallow the contents of your color-box.”

The corners of Schulze’s mouth twitched, and a thousand wrinkles appeared around his keen gray eyes—the idea of becoming the victim of an unhappy love seemed to him comical beyond measure.

“You are mistaken, worthy friend; if any change should occur in my virtuous mode of life, it would be of a thoroughly normal character. Perhaps I shall establish a partnership with Fraulein Stade; she will have her studio on the right, I mine on the left; I’ll praise her pictures, she mine; as I am no pedant, I would give her her choice whether to write her name Frau Schulze-Stade or Stade-Schulze.”

“So you permit yourself this arrogance, Mephistopheles!” interrupted Uncle Bräsigg, phlegmatically; “you are probably sure that the girl will say yes at once?”

“Until now I have only observed that she has an antipathy to you,” added Endymion, indignantly.

“That is the first step towards passionate love. But, good heavens! what am I saying? I shall no longer have two friends, but two rivals, filled with hatred.”

“I should not be disinclined,” observed Uncle Bräsig, thoughtfully; “she is a clever girl, and speaks low German admirably! What a comfort it would be in Rome to be able to speak low German in one’s own house!”

“She has superb dark eyes! She really looked like a beauty in her Grecian costume at the carnival ball given by the artists. If she had a husband, who understood how to manage, she would get three times as much for her pictures. Between ourselves, she has more talent than any of us at Capri.”

“Base speculation!” declaimed Schulze. “If I could only understand, Endymion, how a man with such a languishing moonlight face can possess such a calculating tradesman’s soul. Never mind. You can have Fraulein Stösser; her novels may also have a future, if they are pushed by a clever hand. You will not faithlessly desert her? You are the same as betrothed, and an honorable man holds his word sacred.”

"I betrothed!" cried the other furiously; "you are quite capable of spreading the nonsensical rumor."

At this moment some one knocked gently at the door of the studio.

"Come in!" cried the unwilling betrothed bridegroom.

Schulze started up. "No, no! Moderate your impatience, Endymion; you are committing an offence against propriety. Where is the umbrella, the defence of etiquette? Don't come in, Fraulein; pardon the recklessness of our young friend, who is carried away by impulse."

He stalked through the room, searching in every corner for the umbrella, which was lying on the table. Then he cautiously opened the door just wide enough to thrust his nose through the crack.

"I have brought the colors you want, Mr. William," said Fraulein Stösser's voice; "Gertrude begs you to return them to her; she says she shall need them in a very few days."

"Accept my sincere thanks, dear Fraulein; you are the guardian angel who——"

"Draws us out of the mire," interrupted Uncle Bräsig.

"Bräsig," said Schulze, reproachfully, "you never

deny your prosaic nature—the guardian angel, Fraulein, who scatters the bright dust on the butterflies' wings. In the name of the assembled committee, permit me to press a kiss on this delicate hand—Endymion, don't roll your eyes so terribly; you frighten me. If my friend were only in my place," he murmured significantly—"you will have the kindness to tell the other ladies that we beg them to return to their rooms directly after dinner, and remain there until we, the committee, summon them. Endymion cannot present himself to you at present, because he has put up his hair in curl-papers, in anticipation of the festival—usually he only does it at night," he added, in a tone of the utmost simplicity, making a grimace at his friend.

They heard Fraulein Stösser laugh.

"Farewell, Fraulein."

"I should like to quarter you, William; that gossiping creature will tell Baroness Valmont that my head is full of curl-papers."

"Fraulein Stade will hear it too," replied Schulze, calmly; "console yourself with the consciousness that your locks curl naturally. An honest man despises the opinion of the world."

CHAPTER XI.

WALTER had returned from the Punta di Mitromania at an earlier hour than usual. The heat had not driven him away, for the cliff kept off the rays of the sun and the sea-breeze brought a refreshing coolness ; there was no other spot on the island which afforded so pleasant a resting-place.

He had intended to be very industrious, as he probably would not be disturbed. Andy had said that she would respect his studies and only visit him occasionally. Nothing prevented him from collecting his thoughts, and yet he could not fix his attention upon his work. A rolling pebble, dislodged by the hoofs of a goat, made him start—might not the sound announce the appearance of the elf? He listened to every tone, every noise. Now he fancied he heard a well-known laugh, then thought he saw the flutter of a blue veil. Even when he bent over his book, a dainty little figure with a delicate white face and bluish green nixie eyes hovered before the odes of Horace, and covered the stupid Latin words with her long golden hair.

He passed his hand across his forehead and called himself a dreaming fool ; gradually he curbed his excited imagination and banished the deceitful picture, but repose of soul—an essential condition of successful labor—seemed to have hopelessly disappeared.

On the way he met Marietta, for whom he had not waited, and told her she might have the contents of his lunch basket. What had she been doing all day ? he asked, had she guided strangers over the island ? No, the *signora bionda* had summoned her to sing to her ; the lady wrote down the words and tried to repeat the songs. Walter had heard Andy sing several times and had been surprised by the wonderful *timbre* of her voice. There was something strangely alluring in the sound ; so might dryads and nixies sing ; the tones were weird, wild, and unearthly. Such music ought to be heard at midnight echoing from some dark, silent thicket, or on some lonely seashore, blending with the dashing of the waves. In a room the melody seemed out of place. He had often begged her not to heedlessly throw away the precious gift.

When within ten minutes' walk of the albergo, he perceived Andy. She had mounted the low wall that bordered the narrow road, and was looking down the

path by which he must come. Her airy garments were illumined by the golden light that flooded half the horizon; crimson rays played over the gleaming hair, the delicate transparent face, a vision woven from vapor and light stood before him! With a light bound she sprang from the wall and came running towards him. His heart throbbed passionately and he felt the hot blood rush to his temples, as she seized his arm with both hands, and like a child seeking help, pressed her little head against his shoulder.

"Are you satisfied with me?" she asked, giving him a smiling glance.

"Why satisfied, Andy?" he replied, passionately kissing the white hand.

"I have not ventured to disturb you, although I have been terribly bored all day long—I did not go to the Punta—I feared a cold reception, a frowning brow."

"I believe you would have done better to come, the half expectation that disturbed me would not allow me to work. My reason tried to wish that two little feet might not find their way to me, but I was secretly longing for Puck with every fibre of my heart. I dare not look at the sea any more, Andy, it has the color of your eyes."

"So, sir, you deceitfully conceal your feelings? Didn't

you tell me yesterday, in the plainest terms, that you preferred to be alone? And yet this very day you asked Fraulein Stade to move her easel and camp-chair into your vicinity. I am jealous of this artist with the grave black eyes—jealous, do you hear? To you the fair sex must be personified by me; you must think only of me, dream only of me—especially the latter.”

“And I, what am I to say? Are there not half a dozen artists at your feet already—some of them gifted with very handsome persons? Did not that tall Mr. William, with his moustache and mobile features, entertain you with his quaint conceits and witticisms all last evening? And you condescended to laugh so merrily that his humor sparkled more and more brightly. Who had cause to be jealous then?”

“Not you!” she exclaimed, shaking back her curls. “You see, while in the cradle, some fairy must have bestowed a charm upon me, that exerts its influence over all the lords of creation. I can’t help it; I don’t even place much value upon it, and since I am always sincere to you——”

“Really, Andy, are you sincere?” he asked, raising the little face with his hand.

She nodded hastily. “I will confess that I should

feel uncomfortable without this homage. My gay spirits, my amiability, even my intellect, require this universal admiration. I can thrive only in the sunlight. You may reproach me for being a coquette, as you have already often done; but you ought not to complain—I love you alone, Walter, you alone.”

“You have the gift of driving a man mad,” he said, drawing a long breath, and suddenly clasping the tiny waist with both hands, he raised the slight figure high in the air. “That is the way I should like to release you from the earthly, worthless bonds that bind you, Andy!” he exclaimed in an agitated tone; “tell me again that you love me.”

Like a child repeating its lesson, she uttered the momentous words, “I love you, Walter, you alone. And now, if you please, put me down on the ground; some one might see this acrobatic performance, and have good reason to be astonished.”

He placed her gently on her feet again, and once more the question he had already asked in Rome hovered on his lips: “Will you be my wife?”

As if she had guessed his intention and wished to frustrate it, she drew him rapidly forward, “There’s grandpapa; we must hurry—the dinner-bell is ringing.”

"What a charming dress you have put on, Andy!" said Walter; "the artists will devour you with their eyes."

"How civilized you are becoming!" she answered, laughing; "formerly such things entirely escaped your attention."

"I always notice when a lady dresses tastefully. The setting of those turquoise buttons is remarkably beautiful."

"Yes, it is a costly trimming. Look at this belt-buckle; it is worth examining," she replied, with artless pleasure.

"You did not have these ornaments in Rome, I think?"

"No," she answered somewhat curtly; "they were given to me a short time ago."

He did not ask by whom; he knew that among her relatives and friends there was always some one to load the spoiled child with presents.

The whole company had assembled in the dining-room, when Walter took his seat beside Gertrude, greeted her politely, and asked how she had spent the day. She replied that Baroness Valmont had honored her with a visit to examine her pictures.

"Then she has seen admirable work," he said cordially.

Gertrude made no reply; she was annoyed that he should pay her superficial compliments; he was always absent-minded at such times. He had just glanced at Andy, who was sitting at the upper end of the table listening eagerly to the tall artist at her side, who, with many a furtive glance at the unconscious Fraulein Stösser, was telling some very amusing story. He made grimaces of delight whenever he turned towards Endymion, who was responding to the authoress's advances in a very sulky manner.

"What picture did the baroness like best?" asked Walter, recollecting his neighbor. "She has an instinctively correct judgment, and is only pleased with the finest paintings."

"You have seen the sketch of the picture; it is the one for which I used Giacinta's classic head."

"Ah, 'The meeting!' I remember you made the dramatic portion of the incident very striking. And what else did you show her?"

"I have sent away so many pictures that my studio"—she smiled at the idea of giving this proud name to the one apartment used as sitting, sleeping and

work room—"is very empty. A few sketches—my portfolio of studies." She paused with a deep blush—if Andy had been so indiscreet as to speak of Walter's picture! Happy as she had been when she succeeded in making a striking likeness, she would have torn it into a thousand pieces rather than exposed it to the eyes of strangers.

"You must show me your studies, Fraulein Gertrude," said Walter absently. He seemed to expect no answer, and she made none.

"May I ask you, Herr Professor, to return to the baroness an ornament she forgot or lost in my room," she said, after a pause.

"Why do you not do so yourself?" he asked, watching her as she skilfully prepared the delicious Italian salad from the tender, juicy leaves.

"You will go to her directly after dinner; and I should like to breathe the fresh air for half an hour, as I have not been out of doors all day."

Gertrude had a thoroughly noble, straightforward nature; she hated intrigue and falsehood; her path in life would probably have been easier if she could have resolved to make use of these expedients; she could be frank even to incivility—why did she now do something

that sent the hot blood to her cheeks? It was true that she wanted to take a little walk after dinner, and it would have delayed her to seek the baroness first; it was so easy to give Walter the bracelet that he might hand it to its owner; the keenest eye could detect no design—and yet! In the inmost depths of her soul lurked the thought: Perhaps he will admire the clasp as I admired it; perhaps he will accidentally touch the spring that closes the medallion, and then—yes, then?

She would have liked to draw back the hand that had just held out the bracelet. But he had already taken it, and with the words, “I will execute your commission,” thrust it into his pocket.

CHAPTER XII.

ANDY had ordered her coffee to be served on the terrace belonging to the rooms occupied by General Von Willberg. A lamp stood on the round table, and the air was so still that the flame only flickered when some foolish moth singed its wings in it. To sit on this terrace, smoking a genuine Havana, and gazing at the gently heaving sea, afforded one of those hours of calm enjoyment which are indelibly impressed upon the memory.

"Where is Fraulein Gertrude?" Andy asked Camilla, who leaning on the balustrade gave herself up to enthusiastic, inexpressible emotions, to which Endymion was no stranger.

"She is taking a walk along the road that leads to Anacapri."

"Always lonely and inaccessible! Your friend is somewhat *sauvage*, but full of talent and intellect. I like her extremely, and regret that the attraction does not seem to be mutual."

"What a loving heart she has!" thought Walter, casting

a tender glance at the snowy little face and rosy mouth. There are natures so wonderfully organized, that nothing seems to spoil them! There she sat beside him, holding a cigarette between her delicate lips—merely to induce him to smoke, not because she had any love of it.

“Why, why, Andy,” said her grandfather mischievously, “there was a time when you smoked like a Turk. Twenty cigarettes were not enough for a single day.”

“That was long ago; many, many years ago,” she answered gaily.

“Valmont taught you, did he not?”

“Yes, like so many other follies,” she said bitterly.

“It can hardly be called a folly; many ladies smoke, almost all the Russians do, and if the husband has no objection—I don’t know whether the count——”

“Will you have another cup of coffee, grandpapa?” she interrupted, while a greenish fire sparkled in her eyes. “Fraulein Stösser will pour it out, then of course it will taste better to you. Only don’t pay her too much attention, it might arouse dangerous rivalry.”

Andy had interposed so hastily, interrupted the words on the old gentleman’s lips so skilfully, that Walter had heard and understood nothing.

"I had almost forgotten my commission," he said to her, as they were strolling up and down the smooth walk; "but I won't be guilty of any embezzlement. Do you miss nothing, most careless of elves?"

She raised her hand to her hair, whose curls were fastened with a mother-of-pearl comb, seized the little watch hanging at her belt, counted the turquoise buttons on her dress—"Nothing!"

He shook his head. "How thoughtless you are! You scatter jewels and diamonds along your path."

Drawing out the bracelet, he turned it between his fingers.

"Oh! my bracelet! I have a habit of wearing three or four on each arm; it is convenient to play with them; so I am to be pardoned if I did not instantly notice the loss of one."

"I have not yet examined the treasure; it has no safety chain, that is why it slipped from your arm. It was not made in any Roman jeweler's, for though elegant and tasteful, it has not the peculiar style which recalls antique patterns."

"You are right; the bracelet was not purchased in Rome. Pray, give it to me," she said, watching him uneasily.

“Directly, Andy; only have a little patience.”

“That quality is wholly foreign to my character,” she answered haughtily, tearing the lace on her pocket-handkerchief.

“*La pazienza* is a Christian virtue, which is said to be particularly becoming to women,” he answered smiling; she looked like an insulted queen in her indignation and anger. “A coronet of turquoises—its points outlined by diamonds. Nine? A count’s coronet?”

“Why not?” She raised her head defiantly.

“Nay; if it were a king’s crown, it would never find a fairer wearer. See how brilliant the stones are; they are very artistically cut!” He was in the act of returning the ornament. “I should like to fasten it on your arm myself; then there would at least be no danger of losing it again to-day.” As he touched the clasp, the lid of the medallion sprang open, and he perceived the same portrait that had given Gertrude so much food for thought. His eyes rested searchingly upon the young widow, who stood before him with flushed cheeks and downcast eyes, like a convicted criminal.

“A handsome officer of cuirassiers,” he remarked, with apparent carelessness, handing her the bracelet—
“so the count’s coronet is explained.”

There was something in his tone which quelled her defiance and made her look up anxiously into his face. "He is a cousin of my late husband," she faltered. "I could not refuse the gift——"

"It would have been a pity," he interrupted, "such a costly ornament."

She stamped her foot. "It was a piece of insolence to enclose his portrait. We have not yet gone so far!"

"Not yet—but soon?" he asked, in the same quiet tone.

"Don't provoke me, Walter," she said beseechingly, clasping her little hands upon his arm. "You know I cannot speak of the past or future. Do not grudge me the privilege of enjoying the present with closed eyes; it is so divinely beautiful—brighter than I ever dreamed."

Her voice had a melancholy tone, which touched his inmost heart. Was it not love that always attracted her to him? It was a proof of strong feeling, that she always favored him, who, in the eyes of those who surrounded her, was a mere intruder, whose society was only admissible during the freedom of travelling.

They had moved far enough from the table, at which sat the general, Fraulein Stösser and the companion, not to be overheard. Leaning on the balustrade, they gazed

at the wide sea, gleaming in an uncertain light. The low murmur of voices reached their ears, and rays of colored light flashed here and there on the white walls—the mysterious committee was below, displaying the most feverish activity. Andy was standing close beside him, her golden hair brushed his shoulder.

“In what relation do you stand to that gentleman, Andy?” Erichsen asked gravely, fixing a searching glance upon her face.

“I don’t know myself—in none, if it depended upon my free will.”

“That is no frank reply! You are evading my question.”

Andy’s delicate black eyebrows contracted. “Oh, these men!” she exclaimed almost violently; “how like inquisitors they are in searching into the most insignificant incidents in our lives; nothing must be concealed from them; they would like to know how many times our hearts have throbbed in the presence of this or that person; they would fain look into the depths of our inmost souls to discover the traces of some long-vanished feeling—but they deny us the smallest glimpse of what is passing within them. We must be satisfied with what they graciously confide to us, and, if we are cunning,

what we guess and divine. We must take you as you are ; so do the same with us. Here am I, Andy, somewhat foolish, it is true, but a good-hearted little thing, who—I think—is agreeable enough to please you, and who has repeatedly told and shown you how dearly you were beloved— And now don't torment me with any more questions !”

“ You cannot escape me so ; therefore give up the useless effort to claim equal rights with us in this respect. What we love must be blameless ; a man gives a woman his name, and by so doing declares himself responsible for her to the whole world. If you really love me, I must ask, ‘ In what relation do you stand to the gentleman whose picture you wear, and from whom you receive such costly gifts ? ’ ”

“ Good heavens ! you certainly heard that he is a distant relative, an insignificant man, with a regular, family face. Since the invention of photography, the giving and receiving of portraits has lost all meaning. I have a quantity in my album, whose very names have escaped my memory.”

“ You are not frank, Andy ; your equivocations strengthen my suspicions.”

“ What suspicions, Walter ? Do you suppose this

gentleman occupies my fancy or my heart? Must I cut up this unlucky photograph before your eyes? Or shall I throw the whole bracelet into the sea?"

She had torn it from her arm, and seemed really to intend to carry out her proposal. Erichsen restrained her.

"Let me go; I will never wear it again; it has caused the first quarrel with you."

She threw it angrily on the stone pavement, just at the moment the committee advanced to request the party to go to the dining-hall. The ornament rolled at Schulze's feet.

"Fair queen," said he, handing it on bended knee to the charming owner, "your majesty is scattering jewels among your faithful lieges. Might I be vouchsafed the honor of offering you my arm?"

Either Andy possessed great self-command, or her temperament was really so variable that she could easily pass into a totally different mood. Smiling brightly, she laid her little hand on Schulze's arm.

"My friend, Endymion, will request the happiness of escorting Fraulein Camilla Stösser."

"Ah!" murmured the elf to her cavalier, "we must dread your malice."

“You entirely misunderstand me, madame,” he replied, casting down his eyes with a comical affectation of timidity.

The general and Walter closed the procession, which Schulze triumphantly opened with the little baroness, a proceeding that induced Endymion to mutter sulkily that Mephistopheles always knew how to secure the lion's share.

A little lad, whom the artists called their page, led the way, holding a paper lantern fastened to a cane.

“Transformed into a negro half an hour ago by my own hands,” said William Schulze, looking proudly at him. “I first rubbed his skin with olive oil and afterwards black chalk, a very durable paint, which will last at least a month. The fez was contributed by Uncle Bräsigg, the wide pantaloons by the padrona. True wisdom consists in obtaining the most important results by the simplest means.”

Schulze led the party by a way known only to himself; he traversed every corridor and flight of stairs, to raise expectation to its utmost height. At last, in an almost incomprehensible fashion, they reached the terrace upon which the dining-room opened. The gentlemen had promised no more than they had performed. The gleam-

ing butterflies really rested among the orange trees; white and pink lilies, yellow and purple tulips flamed amid the green vines that covered the veranda; and through the open door appeared the transparency surrounded by laurel branches, the dance of the elves, illumined with most illusive naturalness by Endymion's moon. "Fortunately its rival will not appear until later," said William Schulze, pointing to the dark sky.

When Andy stepped upon the terrace, Bengal lights were burning, whose blood red rays streamed far into the night, revealing the little village of Capri, and steeping the bare cliffs in a magical glow. A cry of delight from the young girls and children, who had already assembled, greeted the scene. "*Che bellezza!*" rang from every lip. As darkness once more closed in and the stars sparkled brightly, the flowers sent forth an intoxicating perfume, and the white teeth glittered in the brown faces as the islanders laughed merrily. The whole scene assumed a strange, fairylike appearance.

'*Presto, presto, ballare! ballare!*' cried Schulze, clapping his hands. Having spent several summers on the island, he knew all the girls by name.

"Bare feet," said the general in surprise, as the motley crowd thronged in, "and no national costume!"

Yes, even here the national costume had disappeared; long calico dresses and white kerchiefs were the usual attire, there was scarcely a bright red bodice or gay apron to be seen. The smoothly brushed hair displayed the noble contour of the head and was fastened at the nape of the neck by silver pins, that resembled spits. But these figures needed no outward adornment. Instead of crowding awkwardly into corners, they moved about with graceful ease; they were enjoying a pleasure themselves, and the foreign spectators did not disturb them in the least; at the utmost they pitied them because they took no part in the affair. A joyous murmuring and buzzing ran through the ranks, they nodded gaily to the artists and answered their jests with artless merriment.

"Where is the best dancer?" cried William Schulze, surveying the room with the eye of a field marshal.

"*Eccomi!*" replied a slender girl, who wore a coral necklace around her throat, "I am the best so long as Giacinta is not here."

"I know it, *figlia mia!* Giacinta is playing *principessa* again and keeping us waiting."

"No, sir, she told me she could not come until she had finished her work at home; she is alone, her mother and brother seldom help her."

“Just see how my granddaughter greets these girls,” said the general to Walter, “no princess could be more gracious! The affable expression with which she speaks to them—and they have neither shoes nor stockings on their feet! I shall always say that a person can form no idea of Italy until he has seen it.”

The dark skinned Nina was just replying to Andy's question: “How long can I dance, *Eccellenza*? *Ma che vuole*? As long as the tambourine sounds. I never get tired, I once danced a day and two nights without stopping, because a *forestiere*, a Russian, wanted to try how long I could hold out. And afterwards I carried stones to Anacapri.”

“How old are you?”

“I shall be sixteen at the next feast day of the holy Antonina.”

“Then you will soon be married,” observed the tall artist, who as he told Andy, felt like the patriarch of Capri.

“Certainly, Signor,” she answered frankly, “I pray to the Holy Virgin that some good honest lad may be found, who will make me his wife.”

“There is my little friend, Marietta,” said the baroness, “without her beloved *asino*! Call her here.”

"We always dance together," said Nina, eagerly beckoning to her playfellow.

Andy unfastened a gold locket from among the charms attached to her watch, and was about to give it to the young girl. Schulze interposed.

"No, no, madame, the people here have their own pride. They will beg and receive anything on the street, but here, where they are entitled to a share in the entertainment, such a gift would offend them. Do you know how Cecco is, Marietta?" he asked.

The girl's large dark eyes filled with tears.

"*Povero Cecco!* I haven't heard a word from him." Her little face assumed a melancholy expression.

"You shall see, madame, how healthy and free from sentimentality are the opinions of these islanders—*Poverina mia*," he continued, turning to the pretty girl, "I was thoughtless to remind you of your *sposo*; now you will sit sadly in the corner and not want to dance."

Marietta opened her great eyes in astonishment, as if she did not understand him. "What a strange idea, signor! If Cecco is sick, or—which may the Virgin forbid—dead, will it do him any good for me to weep for him here? Weeping and wailing always come soon enough."

“That is the only true philosophy! We might learn a great deal in this country, if we could only decide to throw overboard the useless ballast of romantic feeling brought from the other side of the Alps,” said Schulze, and Andy assented to the remark.

The tambourine was brought in, to be subjected to a mysterious process; it was held for some minutes over a lamp, probably, as Schulze observed, to acquire the warmth it afterwards infused into the dancers. The low buzzing notes it produced exerted an electrical influence upon the girls; the bare feet, whose delicacy of form could vie with those of the most aristocratic ladies, twitched impatiently, as if they could remain quiet no longer. A tall girl, with a complexion almost the color of mahogany and glowing eyes, seized the tambourine, and waving it triumphantly over her head, sat down in a chair which took the place of an orchestra, and began to beat it. The hollow yet vibrating sound, and the ringing of the little bells, blended with the shrill, high-pitched singing of a half-grown lad, who uttered an infinite variety of words to a melody confined within the compass of about half a dozen notes. He stood beside the girl who was playing on the tambourine, with his hands crossed behind his back and his head bent for-

ward, pouring out the words with incredible verve and sharpness of accent.

“Tarantella!” shouted the young girls, exultantly clapping their hands. Nina and Marietta sprang forward, and now began that advancing and flying, twisting and turning, bending and swaying of the upper portion of the body, which form the simple and yet ever-changing figures of the tarantella. By degrees the movements of the indefatigable dancers, who did not know what it was to be out of breath, grew more rapid; their light dresses fluttered to and fro, but there was the most perfect modesty in their deportment—even their ankles were scarcely visible—the world had vanished from their memory, nothing remained except the smooth stone floor over which they floated—the buzzing tambourine, whose notes made them half delirious with excitement. Each had eyes only for her chosen partner; a sign was sufficient for them to understand each other, and instantly pass into a new figure. Five or six couples danced together; if one girl sprang forward, another instantly drew back and relieved the tambourine-player, who then in her turn joined the whirling circle.

The most artless, unfeigned delight sparkled in their dark eyes and lurked in the smiles of the crimson lips;

there was no panting for breath—no stamping; the slender figures glided to and fro without effort, swaying from the hips with inimitable grace; now raising their rounded arms high above their heads; now extending them as if in entreaty.

Andy was delighted; with sparkling eyes and half-parted lips, she gazed intently at the beautiful scene; the atmosphere around her seemed to burn with a fiery glow and heat the blood in her veins. She leaned eagerly forward, and her dainty figure, swaying lightly to and fro, involuntarily obeyed the irresistible magic of the tarantella. She no longer noticed that a dark cloud still rested on Walter's brow; she forgot that the scene of to-day would be repeated on the morrow, and he would resolutely demand an explanation; she did not think of the cavalry officer with the handsome, stupid face—she entered into the happiness of the moment, trembled with the longing to rush into the ranks of the dancers and whirl madly around. It afforded the artists no little pleasure to turn their eyes from the dark-skinned daughters of the island to the peach-like complexion of the elf with the gleaming golden hair.

The general was speechless, but strained his eyes till they threatened to start from their sockets.

“These girls are enchanting little witches,” he said, enthusiastically, to the professor; “we have at the capital a ballet which is by no means bad, but I assure you I shall never go to it again. Wholly artificial and very clumsy, compared to this dancing.”

CHAPTER XIII.

SOON after the dancing commenced, Gertrude had glided into the hall and noiselessly seated herself in a corner, from which she could overlook the whole scene. Walter approached her chair as soon as he discovered her; the artist's quiet bearing exerted a soothing influence amid the wild abandon of the scene. He was not in the mood to share the universal hilarity; the burden that oppressed his soul grew heavier whenever his eyes rested upon Andy. Could that childish face, so radiant with delight, so artlessly reflecting every emotion, deceive? And what was the cause of this deceit?

"This is the first time I ever saw a tarantella," said Gertrude, in a pleasant tone; "and I am completely bewildered by the impression. Is not this a highly-favored people? The attitudes these girls assume might drive an artist to despair, for every attempt to reproduce them would be stiff and tame. And the animation of the faces! I can't imagine how Italian artists, surrounded by types like these, can produce so many unnatural, in-

significant pictures. If I were a sculptor, little Marietta, as she floats with outstretched arms towards Nina, would seem the very ideal of a Hebe. When I went to walk just now, I passed a church, which I entered a moment. Marietta was kneeling, bathed in tears, before an image of the Virgin, to whom she had just offered a candle, praying, amid her sobs, that Cecco might return in safety. And now——”

“Now she is dancing like one possessed!” interrupted Walter. “Does that surprise you? She has left her tears before the altar of her patron saint, and now throws herself into the arms of pleasure. *Evviva la gioia!* Do you not believe that, even in our circle, there are women who just as unconsciously obey every impulse of their changeful feelings?”

A whisper ran through the group of girls: “*La Giacinta, la Giacinta,*” they murmured audibly, and all eyes turned towards the new-comer.

She stood leaning with folded arms against the door, the classic, clearly cut profile brightly illumined, the raven hair gathered into a knot fastened low on the proud neck. In the full consciousness of her faultless beauty, she allowed her dark eyes to wander carelessly over the crowd, where she found no one who could vie

with her. She wore nothing but a brown calico skirt, and red and white striped kerchief crossed over her bosom, but her noble bearing gave an aristocratic air to the simple costume. As soon as little Marietta perceived her, she instantly withdrew from the ranks to give up her place to Giacinta, who, with the exception of Nina, was considered the best dancer of the tarantella.

“There she is! There she is! I recognised her at once,” cried Andy eagerly. “How fortunate that I am not a man; I should fall madly in love with her! Flames shoot from beneath her broad lids, and an expression of deadly coldness lurks around the stern mouth—she is magnificent! How can you be so indifferent?” she said almost angrily to the tall artist. “He who can see so beautiful a creature without losing his head, has none at all.”

“I should neither have fallen in love with the Capitoline Venus, nor any other goddess,” he replied, twisting the ends of his moustache. “Just think, madame, of always seeing before you the same classic features, which eternally wear the same expression. Horrible! I should finally slit her nose or lips, merely for the sake of a change. This monumental regularity annoys me—where nature exhausts herself in such perfect external beauty,

there is nothing left for the interior; the brain is usually incomplete."

Giacinta had taken her place opposite Nina, and, bending lightly forward, allowed her smaller companion to circle around her; a spell seemed to paralyze her limbs; indolently, almost reluctantly, she followed the exciting rhythm of the music. Gradually she became more animated, raised her arms, threw back her head, and glided with inimitable grace, which, however, was still blended with a shade of stern dignity, towards her more delicate partner; then followed attitudes whose beauty could not be surpassed by the imagination of the most talented artists. For half an hour the two girls danced almost entirely alone, in the most rapid time, yet they did not pause to take breath, nor was the color heightened in their cheeks. The others had stopped to allow the skill of these two to shine unimpaired. Little Marietta seemed fairly intoxicated with delight; the tambourine whirled madly in her fingers, and her voice drowned that of the half-grown lad.

In the open door stood and sat a dense crowd of women and children; brown faces peered in at the windows, and white teeth glittered in smiles. It was Capri, the classic island, the lonely rock in the blue sea. Out

of doors the waves plashed, the roses breathed forth their perfume, and the stars glittered in all their splendor from the Italian sky.

"I shall never be able to live in the North again!" cried Andy; "I shall always come back here to the home of pleasure. Dance with one of these charming girls," she exclaimed, turning to Walter, whom she had summoned to her side; "how can you remain such a grave and sober spectator? Every nerve in my body is tingling!"

He shook his head. "We should destroy the picture, if we were to enter it in our stiff costume."

Endymion did not need to be asked. "These girls dance polkas and waltzes better than our ladies," he said to the professor, and drew one from the crowd, whom he released gasping for breath, after circling with her about a dozen times around the hall. She laughed at the signor for getting tired so soon, she could have held out an hour longer.

"The ladies ought to try it once," said Schulze, who saw that the baroness could scarcely keep her little feet still.

"I don't know," she replied irresolutely, "perhaps grandpapa would not approve."

"You need not observe the rules of etiquette at Capri," persuasively answered Schulze, who was only too anxious to see her dance; "at the harvest festivals at home, no lady disdains to waltz with the steward's son."

"What do you think, Herr Professor?" she asked hesitatingly. The noise drowned her words, so she bent towards him and whispered: "Don't look so gloomy, Walter, or I shall fear you are angry with me--did I not, like a fool, follow you here from Florence, and can you still seriously doubt my love?"

Before he could reply, Giacinta and Nina were standing before them, each with a glass of fiery Capri wine: "*La sua salute, Eccellenza!*" they said bowing, and twining their arms around each other, emptied the glasses to the dregs.

"*Non vuole ballare?*" asked Nina coaxingly, and added that they should consider it a great honor to teach the signora the tarantella.

Andy struggled against her inclinations; the old general looked thoughtful, said he should have no objection if it were not for the spectators, and whispered: "Child, remember the artists, whom we really do not know at all—who can tell what sort of people they may be?"

The opposition irritated her, and starting up she ex-

claimed : " Come, Fraulein Stösser, you ought not to let me dance alone, you must join too."

Fraulein Camilla hesitated to obey the command, but Schulze whispered : " Don't spoil our pleasure, dear Fraulein, my friend Endymion has not ventured to ask you to dance yet, he is so very timid, it will encourage him if you enter the ranks."

Nina seized her by the hand and drew her into the middle of the room. Andy, who always asserted that nature had intended her for a ballet dancer, had long since mastered the simple and yet, in consequence of their complications, difficult figures of the national dance. At first she imitated Giacinta's movements timidly and slowly, then grew firmer and bolder; her little feet scarcely seemed to touch the floor; she threw back the loose sleeves of her dress, so that they revealed the white, rounded arms; her mother-of-pearl comb fell out, and the red gold tresses floated in glittering waves around the dainty figure. Giacinta, perceiving a worthy partner, gave herself up without reserve to the intoxicating motion; every nerve swelled with energy; she resembled one of those Bacchantes who circle with upraised arms around the chariot of Dionysius, but the classic face still preserved the same cold expression, and no tinge

of color suffused the pale cheeks. Andy, who vied with her in passionate energy, was glowing like a crimson rose; her eyes glittered with a fiery light, and sparks seemed to dart from her floating hair.

“A flame, an embodied flame!” said the artists, who could not weary of gazing at the wonderful contrast. The fair daughter of the North concealed within her heart a more intense ardor than the girl born near Vesuvius.

Meantime Fraulein Stösser had honestly endeavored to perform the peculiar dance, which cannot be taught. She twisted, she put one arm on her hip and raised the other, she balanced conscientiously to and fro, only she usually executed the figures at the wrong time, so that Nina, her active graceful partner, became impatient and told her to go now to the right, now to the left. The portly authoress panted, her fat, good-natured face grew almost purple—no, this pleasure was horribly tiresome! Nevertheless she would have continued to dance until utterly exhausted, for Endymion and Uncle Bräsigg were watching her with interest—only the most complete self-control prevented the latter from throwing himself on the floor and bursting into shouts of laughter—had not Gertrude, the stern Gertrude, come forward, seized her by

the hand, and whispered: "Stop, Camilla, you are making yourself ridiculous!"

"Ridiculous!" She turned angrily away—had not the old general, kind old gentleman that he was, just said:

"Well, that is very pretty, my dear Fraulein; but hard work, isn't it? Makes you very warm?"

And Schulze gravely assured her that she had decided talent, and, for a first attempt, had succeeded wonderfully well.

"Wonderfully," repeated Uncle Bräsigg, and disappeared behind a laurel-bush, to give vent to his mirth undisturbed.

"You will kill yourself, Andy!" cried the old general to his granddaughter, who was vying with the girls of the island in endurance.

A new idea darted into the reckless little head—she snatched the tambourine from Marietta's hand, and beating it as skilfully as if she had practised the art for years, took the place of the young girl, whom she pushed among the dancers, glancing triumphantly around as a burst of applause greeted this unexpected intermezzo. As she sat there, with her little feet crossed, her head with its wealth of hair thrown back, and a saucy smile

on her lips, even Gertrude could not turn her eyes away. She was one of those fortunate mortals who can venture upon anything, because they do everything with grace and ease. The coy Giacinta seemed bewitched by the foreign lady. "*E una diavolina per ballare!*" she exclaimed admiringly; physical suppleness made a greater impression upon her than Gertrude's genius in producing a picture upon canvas.

"For Heaven's sake, don't drink that!" exclaimed Schulze, and Walter rushed with him towards the thoughtless beauty, who was raising a glass of ice-water to her lips. But she had just drained it at a single draught.

"Why should I be hurt by what the others do?" she asked, glancing at the peasant-girls, who constantly drank water in the intervals of the dance.

"The best antidote is to dance again," replied Schulze; "I will represent the orchestra, for I am not wholly inexperienced in such arts."

"Waltz time!" she cried, laughing joyously, and drawing Erichsen away with her. "You won't refuse me?" she whispered. "I have never danced with you, and would wager that you are an admirable partner."

What could he do but throw his arm around her and fly through the hall?

“Look kindly at me once,” she pleaded gently. “It seems as if I had been transported into another world, where only pleasure wields the sceptre. To-morrow it will be over; let me enjoy myself thoroughly to day.”

“How could you allow yourself to be carried away by your thoughtless gayety, Andy? It tortured me to see how those strangers’ eyes followed your every movement.”

Her red lips curled somewhat scornfully. “What do I care for these people? I shall never meet them again!”

“And each individual can say you danced the tarantella before him with inimitable grace.”

“Let them—it is a matter of indifference to me.”

“And my opinion also?”

“I will plead to *you* until you absolve your little Andy. And now I will hear no more reproaches”—she pressed his hand—“I have confessed my fault, and that is the most essential thing.”

“You still owe me a confession.”

“What is it?”

“How you obtained that young officer’s picture.”

“Oh, how tiresome!” she said with a comical emphasis, pretending to suppress a yawn. “If you knew what unpleasant thoughts you conjure up! Let us defer the explanation a few days—it will take too much time now.”

The answer did not satisfy him, but the bewitching little creature exercised a tolerably powerful influence over his imagination and his heart. It was inconceivable that she, who had shown him her love in such an impulsive, spontaneous manner, could be bound by other ties. The handsome young man was no rival—the scornful indifference with which she spoke of him had not been feigned. What was he then? A relative? Good heavens, how elastic and comprehensive was the idea!

The ball continued its course undisturbed. A German artist, who had lately arrived from his own country, kept time on his violin—which he played very tolerably—to the notes of the tambourine; a quadrille followed a polka. Andy went from one partner to another, and each released her reluctantly. Fraulein Stösser reckoned this evening among the brightest hours of her life; as there were very few ladies, she was in demand and received a great many invitations to dance. Schulze danced with her in a quadrille, and entertained her very

amusingly while executing the most extraordinary steps.

Gertrude had refused all invitations. "I have never enjoyed this pleasure, and am too old to make up for lost time."

She had gone out upon the terrace, and was gazing into the brightly lighted room with its gay company. Giacinta leaned on the balustrade beside her, eagerly watching the beautiful lady with the golden hair, who danced the tarantella like a native.

"Has she a *sposo*?" she asked Gertrude.

"I don't know; she is a widow."

"*Una vedova! Poveretta!* She won't remain one long; her eyes bewitch all the men. The signor for whom Marietta carries so many books to the Punta, never looks away from her, although he is talking to the general with the white hair. *Una bellissima creatura!* She is as light as a feather; I could lift her with one hand. She told me she would come to see me in my *casetta*, and let me row her out on the sea."

Even a nature so wild and untamed as Giacinta's feels the magic of this peculiar, incomprehensible charm, thought Gertrude. Providence cannot provide for a woman better than by endowing her with grace and

beauty. She had sought her chamber long before, when the breeze still bore on its wings the notes of the violin and tambourine. Suddenly the music stopped. It was when Andy, with a hasty greeting to the company, and the words: "I thank you, gentlemen; I shall never forget your entertainment!" glided from the room. She always disappeared in this unexpected manner, for she hated introductory phrases, such as: It is quite time to go; I believe I must think of leaving, and such remarks in which women usually spend an hour before they carry out their design. Andy knew her advantage better. When she left a gay circle, she was universally regretted. People asked: Where did she go? I just saw her here! No, she was sitting there! And so each busied himself with the vision that had vanished like a will-o'-the-wisp.

The general, who had courteously thanked the gentlemen for the pleasure afforded his granddaughter, said to Walter: "The child is terribly hard to manage. It is a wonder that all her incivilities are pardoned. Would you believe that she left Rome, where she had been so cordially received, without making a single farewell visit? She said: 'Have the trunks packed; we will leave to-morrow, and I shall call on nobody. It is a stupid custom to tell every individual where and why you are

going, and be obliged to answer the inevitable question: "What impression did Rome make upon you?" I should of course answer, out of mere opposition: "None at all, or a very slight one," and at last be voted very stupid.' She insisted upon having her own way, and the only concession I obtained was that she sent cards——"

"And then she risks her life to save a stranger's child!" observed Erichsen.

The general nodded. "My wife and I have given up the attempt to exert any influence over her. Although she looks so ridiculously young, she is no longer a child, and as a rule behaves with due consideration. She marks out a straight line, and although she diverges a hundred times, always returns to it. When she was a little girl only six years old, she said, 'I am going to be wild for half an hour!' And then she really acted like a young colt; but the instant the time was over she stopped, sat down, and behaved as quietly as the most well-bred child. I wish I were at ease in regard to her future. She must marry of course; circumstances compel her to do so, and she is too wise to run her head against a wall. Good-night. Find some opportunity of speaking to her; she has a very high opinion of you."

How high that opinion was, the worthy, but by no means sharp-sighted general, did not suspect.

In the dining-hall below, the young girls, after devouring huge piles of macaroni, scattered like a swarm of bees. The artists extinguished the paper lanterns, which might prove useful on some other occasion. Fraulein Stösser had been escorted to the upper story by Endymion, who seemed to have submitted to his fate of playing the rôle of her adorer. Then a bowl of punch was brewed, around which the artists sat until daybreak. William Schulze proposed the health of a betrothed couple, who would not long conceal their happiness—which produced an angry reply from Endymion.

Walter lingered a long time in the loggia adjoining his room; an intoxicating perfume exhaled from the little orange garden, and blended in friendly fashion with the aroma of his cigar. The deep silence around, the soft, dark night invited meditation. True, the elf with the gleaming hair—"the flame," as William Schulze christened her—hovered before his memory, but by degrees clearness of thought returned

The blood mounted to his temples, as with inexorable sternness he said to himself: "I am the secret lover of an aristocratic lady, who has not the courage to acknowledge me before the world!" Might not her grandparents reproach him with having betrayed their

confidence? Believing him to be a man of honor, they had admitted him to their home, and often intrusted their granddaughter to his protection. If Andy loved him with the strength of which she was capable, she would overlook all external considerations and share his fate—and he—yes, it would make him happy to have this fluttering sunbeam, this gay, mischievous sprite always near him. She had stolen his heart, there was a magic in her presence that intoxicated the coldest nature. When he imagined how, after being exhausted by severe mental labor, he would hear the low, silvery laughter, the witty prattle, he already felt refreshed and strengthened. Among the cautious, deliberate natures, which modern times have produced, even among women, this original character, so far removed from all calculation and plotting, was like a bubbling woodland spring. What was the meaning of the bracelet? Pshaw! a mere piece of childish nonsense, to which he had attributed far too much importance. Had she not, in his society, always been truthful and sincere? How frankly she had related her past life! not many women would have had the courage to make such an unreserved confession. She would give the explanation he had somewhat imperiously demanded of her own free will; he need only refrain

from forcing her to it ; she was easily guided by affection. He would educate her by degrees ; this noble nature still promised a beautiful flower. Yes, he loved her passionately, it was useless to struggle against the conviction. The words she had murmured in a tone of comic reproach still rang in his ears : “ Did I not follow you here from Florence—can you ask a stronger proof of my love ? ”

CHAPTER XIV.

THE next morning the sky was of the purest, deepest blue, but a strong wind blew, which, should it increase in violence, threatened to separate Capri from the mainland. Walter's hat was torn from his head as he walked to the Punta, and only little Marietta's goat-like agility succeeded in catching it ere it was hurled into a bottomless gulf. She prattled gaily about the previous evening, how all the girls agreed that the entertainment was the finest ever given on the island, how the padrone had been ordered to charge one *fiasco di vino* after another to the artists, how delicious the macaroni was; but the crown of everything had been the *bella principessa bionda*. Giacinta had said that the sun need not shine in the North, because the ladies had such bright hair; and if all the people were as kind and cordial as the signora, she would go there without hesitation. "*E la Giacinta, che lo dice!*" added the child emphatically, as if she meant to say: her words have double weight!

"She would be a charming bride for you!" laughed Marietta, with feminine cunning.

"In our country girls do not think of marrying," he answered humorously.

"Don't think of marrying?" she exclaimed, opening her black eyes to their widest extent; "of what do they think then?"

"Of studying; they learn a great deal from books."

"*Povere ragazze!*" she sighed, compassionating the sad fate of her sisters, who were compelled to fill their heads with learning, instead of looking out for a suitor.

Morning had not, as often happens, shown matters to Walter in a different light; on the contrary he had become more decided and resolute in his plans and designs. It even seemed to him as if he had hitherto exaggerated the difficulties that beset an alliance with Andy. After all, it was no such remarkable event that the granddaughter of General Von Willberg, the Baroness Von Valmont, should give her hand to a professor, whose name was not unknown to fame. Heaven be praised, distinctions of rank were no longer so broadly marked, and in the capital particularly people were tolerably enlightened in this respect; some of the principal physicians, nay some of his own colleagues had married

ladies of noble birth, and no one wondered at it. He had learned from Von Linden, and Andy had confirmed the truth of the story, that General Von Willberg had no property; the thought that his granddaughter might be left unprovided for, seemed to have already made the old gentleman anxious, his remarks yesterday indicated it. Walter's position and income would probably soon improve, his pen was daily winning him wider renown, and he felt a vital energy which would require a long time to be exhausted. True, he could not offer Andy a brilliant life, but her existence would be one of ease and comfort. If she loved him, the sacrifice would be a very trifling one. The dainty boots at sixty francs a pair, which might be torn the second day they were donned, must first be laid on the altar; the long dresses with their costly trimmings would follow; the saddle-horse and private carriage would perhaps weigh heavily in the scale. But if she loved him!

Meantime he listened to the prattling of little Marietta; it pleased him that these simple artless people should admire and gaze at Andy as if she were a creature from fairyland. The wind was not felt on the Punta, as the high cliffs on either side completely shielded it. The waves were beginning to show caps of foam, and the

water had that transparent blue color, which is peculiar to it when a storm is stirring its depths.

After forming a fixed determination to have an explanation in regard to his relations with Andy, Walter had regained his calmness. As soon as anything received a settled place in his life, it ceased to exert a disturbing influence upon his mind. It was with renewed energy that he turned his attention to his work to-day; he did not listen for the rustle of a dress, the silvery tones of a childish voice, but became completely absorbed in his task. Words and images poured into his mind, points of comparison and combinations appeared of their own accord, many a ray of light darted across his brain so suddenly and unexpectedly, that he thought the clear, convincing argument must have long since slumbered within him.

He had written in this way for several hours, almost without looking up, when he heard a light step coming down the slope; his composure was strangely disturbed; it must be Andy! No, it was not; she would not have stepped over the rolling stones so cautiously—the path was by no means dangerous to one free from giddiness. The figure in the brown woollen dress, with the broad-brimmed black straw hat, was Gertrude, who carried her

sketch-book under her arm, her camp-chair and umbrella in her hand.

“Fraulein Stade!” exclaimed Walter, gaily; “are you going to bear me company in my solitude? That would be so delightful that I scarcely venture to utter the supposition.”

He started up and held out his hand. The artist merely touched it with the tips of her fingers.

“Let us omit these compliments,” she said, with a faint smile; “I neither desire nor know how to answer them. I shall trouble myself as little about you as you will about me, and thus we can both be at ease and industrious.”

“I don’t doubt that you will ignore me and have eyes only for your sketch, but permit me to rejoice in this interruption. May I ask you to devote a little of your attention to the contents of this basket? I am very hungry, for I forgot to give my stomach its necessary sustenance.”

“Thank you; I lunched before I left the house.”

“Did you walk all the way, carrying your chair, umbrella and portfolio?”

“I am used to these rambles.”

“Then at least do not grudge yourself a few minutes’

rest; weary and exhausted as you are, you cannot possibly begin to work at once. Do me the favor to eat this orange—unluckily, I have no glass to offer you some wine, and I dare not ask you to drink out of the bottle.”

Gertrude could not, without seeming uncivil, decline the friendly offer; she removed the ugly, disfiguring hat, pushed the thick black hair back from her pale face, and slowly began to peel the orange.

“Does not my intrusion into your universally respected asylum surprise you?” she asked, with downcast lashes. “I told you only yesterday that I had given up my plan of sketching this view.”

“For the present, you said, because you had other work to finish.”

“Yes, it is so; but to-day I was forced to experience that even a firm will sometimes fails. I was not capable of executing my task. My room is oppressively hot; a mist swam before my eyes, so that I could scarcely distinguish the colors. I feared I might spoil the whole picture by some awkward stroke, and therefore determined to cease working. A change often produces an inspiriting effect. I hope I shall succeed better in sketching from nature, that the fresh air will strengthen my nerves.”

"You really do look ill, Fraulein Gertrude," replied Walter, gazing with earnest sympathy at the young girl, who was seated at some distance from him; "if I might venture to assume authority over you, I would order you to do nothing for three months."

"Would you obey such a command?"

"I could not, because circumstances prevent."

"I am in the same situation. We women who earn our livelihood and win our own places in life, must toil like men, without having their physical strength,—therein lies the difficulty."

There was no reply to be made to this. Only a kind fairy, who might have flung a fortune into the girl's lap, could have given a cheering answer. Gertrude had risen to select the best point from which to make her sketch.

"So you paint landscapes also?" asked Erichsen.

"I at first thought my talents were limited exclusively to that department, until I afterwards discovered my real field—genre pictures; yet the landscape studies I have conscientiously made are of great assistance to me."

She bent over the portfolio on her lap and sketched the outlines of the picture with a firm hand. Walter took up his pen, which soon moved swiftly and steadily

over the paper. Two hours elapsed in this manner, without a look or word having been exchanged between the two. Walter, who had just written the concluding sentence of a paragraph, raised his head and leaned comfortably back. Gertrude's profile was turned towards him, and he noticed its pure, noble outlines; the beautiful contour of the head was plainly visible under the smoothly-brushed hair; the heavy black braids that rested like a diadem above her brow, increased the classic character of the regular features. She only lacked the charm of grace to be really beautiful; her face was pale and colorless, and around the mouth appeared stern lines, which must deepen prematurely into wrinkles; the heavy eyebrows looked sinister and gloomy.

The girl felt the gaze fixed upon her; she would not turn, but under its influence a dark flush mounted slowly to her temples.

"How well she can look!" thought Walter; "she must once have been a beauty."

Once! She was only three years older than Andy, yet care and deprivations had already effaced the bloom of youth.

"I think it my duty to disturb you, Fraulein Ger-

trude. Let us talk for fifteen minutes. I will be responsible for the waste of time."

She laid aside her brush, and he begged permission to examine her work.

"You paint with wonderful rapidity!" he exclaimed in surprise. Her great talent was evident from the fact, that the first strokes were enough to induce any one to say that a few spots of color would be sufficient to distinctly show the idea of the picture.

"Does it not cause you pain to be compelled to resign the children of your fancy to strangers?"

"No; the bond that unites me to them is sundered as soon as the gilt frame encloses them. I am even glad to get rid of them, not only because they have brought me money,—although I take that also into account—but because they have become too independent of me. They seem to look at me coldly. I have an uncomfortable feeling in regard to them."

"Then, if not restrained by necessity, you would be negligent in the execution?"

"It might be so, and certainly to the detriment of my talent. I should perhaps lose the power to finish anything. I always prefer to paint certain portions of my pictures—a head, a figure, an effect of light; then the

brush seems to move of its own accord, and I feel as if I were involuntarily obeying some controlling power. The remainder requires very perceptible exertion."

"Probably the portions that most interest you are those in which the meaning of the picture is centred."

"Usually. Yet I reproach myself for this unequal interest; for nothing should be of secondary importance to the artist. Raphael, in his masterly picture of Leo X., painted the bell standing on the table with the same care as the features of the marked countenance."

Walter had never heard Gertrude talk so agreeably. Her curt, abrupt replies to his questions, which, to be sure, only concerned the most trivial things, had repelled him. He now discovered that she possessed a pleasant voice, and conversed in a very animated, natural manner. If she only had not worn that horrible straw hat, which doubtless protected her eyes very well, but resembled the lid of a pot! Besides, the rest of her toilette was too plain and tasteless. She might have paid a little more attention to her personal appearance.

"How much longer do you expect to remain here?" he asked.

"I shall set out on my return in a month, but do not yet know whether I shall remain until then at Capri."

"I remember having heard that you lived in Paris. Shall you go back there?"

"No; I am going home."

"Home?"

"Does it surprise you that a lonely girl has a home?" she asked quickly. A bright expression flitted over her grave face. "Certainly I have one. It is small and plain, but I feel happy in it. Much as I have enjoyed this journey to Italy, for which I passionately longed and really made great sacrifices, the yearning often seizes upon me to be once more within my own four walls, where each article of furniture is connected with some memory. How I was obliged to economize, '*pour être dans mes meubles*,' as they say in Paris. When I had at last accumulated the necessary money, and for the first time entered a furniture store to select the articles needed for my room, I was actually excited—I, who am usually so calm. One must know the annoyances to which a lady is exposed in furnished lodgings to be able to understand my delight. Now it seems to me as if I were living like a princess, because I am no longer obliged to calculate as carefully as before. When I think how I was compelled to economize in Paris——"

"Did you go there alone?"

She nodded. "Entirely alone, and I was only eighteen years old, did not understand the language—for French was not taught on the Luneburg moors—and the money given me by friends was scarcely enough for a bare maintenance. Fortunately, my teacher was sufficiently interested in my talent to allow me to visit his studio gratuitously—a great relief to me. After I had sketched and painted all day, satisfying my appetite with a handful of roasted chestnuts, I climbed five flights of stairs to my attic, prepared my simple dinner, which at the utmost consisted only of fried potatoes and salad, and by the aid of a grammar, dictionary, and some old newspapers, which I bought as waste paper, learned French. At the end of a few months, I could speak with tolerable ease, and as soon as I could understand what people said, lost the sad sense of complete loneliness."

"You have been obliged to torment yourself as much as I."

She fixed her dark eyes upon him.

"Have you too struggled with want?" she asked in surprise.

"As a student, and afterwards as a private tutor, my income did not exceed yours," he answered smiling; "it

is not long since the purchase of a pair of gloves caused me a great deal of perplexity."

"Gloves I then reckoned as articles of luxury, with which I could dispense, but I have been ready to shed tears over the symptoms of impending dissolution in boots, to whose durability I had unsuspiciously trusted. Strange," she said after a pause, "I did not think you had ever struggled with want! I have often noticed that care leaves much deeper and more indelible traces on women, than men. We cannot deny it when we have suffered, and the flower of our lives seems for ever crushed."

"You are more delicately organized," he replied; "and if our society were not so artificial, would be spared the necessity of vying with us."

She had taken up her brush and palette, and was busily painting again. "I can be very well satisfied with the goal I have attained, and must gratefully acknowledge that I have been endowed with a talent which half obviates the necessity of industry; but one thing has remained to me from the toilsome past—the fear of want! He who calls poverty poetical can never have experienced it; there is nothing more prosaic."

Walter assented to this opinion, and both became once more absorbed in their occupations.

"Herr Professor," Gertrude said at last.

He started, the afternoon was already far advanced. The artist was preparing to depart, and had already donned the ugly black pot-lid she called a hat.

"Is it so late?" asked Walter, pressing his hand across his brow.

She pointed to the mountain peaks, already glowing with the crimson light of sunset.

"Leave your traps here, Fraulein; why should you drag them home with you? Marietta will put everything on the donkey."

Gertrude declined the proposal. "They do not trouble me, and I am very particular about my tools, I never trust them to any one."

She was standing before him laden with various articles.

"At least allow me to help you up the steep path. You might slip and fall."

This request Gertrude also declined. "I should like to ask you one favor, Herr Professor," she said with a slight shade of embarrassment.

"I am entirely at your service."

"You are well acquainted with Baroness Von Valmont, and I believe an old friend."

Walter's assent was somewhat curt.

"You know also that Fraulein Stösser often serves as a butt for the jests of the artists at the albergo; I must admit she unfortunately often promotes their aim by many an act of absurdity; her failing, however, is only vanity, which injures no one except herself. I have often told her the truth, but she is incorrigible. I cannot protect her against jokes confined within certain limits; she has only herself to blame and is old enough to be her own guardian, but I should like to save her from being too harshly used. Scenes such as dancing the tarantella yesterday must not be repeated." Gertrude cast down her eyes and continued: "I should like to ask you to use your influence with the baroness, that the latter may not induce Fraulein Stösser to commit any more of the extravagances which expose her to universal ridicule."

"I will fulfil your request, although I am sure that the baroness's tact will render my interference superfluous."

Gertrude detected the repressed indignation in the tone of his voice; he was angry with her for having ventured to express anything that resembled disapproval or censure of Andy's conduct. It wounded her that he

offered his hand so coldly in bidding her farewell. How deeply he must love this woman, if he could not endure to have the slightest shadow rest upon her image! She too had formed a fixed resolution during the previous night: if Erichsen prolonged his stay at Capri, she would leave the island, where frequent interviews could not be avoided. She had remained in his presence several hours to-day, as a sort of test of her self-control. Her love for him had obtained more and more mastery over her soul, and, as she perceived with terror, paralyzed her imagination. The weariness and lassitude that often overpowered her, the indolence that prevented eager, active work, were the natural consequences of the grief that oppressed her heart. There could be no other happiness for her than labor, continual labor; she possessed a talent which, in the opinion of others, was enough in itself to brighten and satisfy a life. She did not quarrel with her fate, but oftentimes a horror stole over her at the thought that each morning she would rise and sit at her easel precisely as she had done the day before, and so on for years, until her death. Always alone, wrapped up in herself, depending on herself, laboring for herself. Must not feeling and imagination gradually wither and die, and would she not be compelled, like many of the

colleagues whom she despised, to conceal the lack of real feeling by the technical merit of the picture? And then the one thing which had hitherto sustained and consoled her—pleasure in her own creations—would vanish.

CHAPTER XV.

THE curtains in Baroness Von Valmont's sleeping-room were still closed, though it was late in the morning. She boasted with good reason of her unimpaired health; her inner organization seemed as perfect as the external husk that inclosed it. The only medicine she required to battle against any impending illness, was sleep. The remedy must have been in her own constitution, for it never failed. Whenever she felt ill or had endured any violent agitation, she threw herself on a bed and went to sleep, and this slumber, which, in its perfect repose, resembled that of a little child, had sometimes lasted twenty-four hours. When she awoke, she was fresh and bright as a rose.

To-day also her eyes did not open until noon; she had gone to bed late, and the violent exertion of dancing had probably wearied her, though she did not know it. Her maid had received orders not to wake her under any circumstances, but wait until summoned by her bell.

At twelve o'clock William Schulze appeared, to in-

quire for the baroness's health, and humbly ask if she remembered the promise she had given him yesterday, to grant him the honor of sitting? The tall artist knew how to express himself in remarkably well chosen language, if occasion required.

He treated the maid very courteously, called her mademoiselle, and asked how she liked Italy? The Frenchwoman answered, "*Oh! très bien, c'est assez joli,*" only she did not understand how people could admire old rubbish and ruins; if all these things were removed and cleaned, the country would be "*infiniment plus joli.*" But even "*Madame la Baronne*" was delighted with them.

William Schulze eagerly took advantage of every opportunity to extend his knowledge, and therefore asked whether mademoiselle had been long in the baroness' service?

Yes, she had been in the family seven years and known the late M. le Baron. In reply to the remark that he was undoubtedly a very agreeable man, she indignantly replied:

"He wasn't a man at all! He was a skeleton, a corpse, a monster! My poor young mistress—how he tormented her!" she sighed.

Schulze could not make any farther inquiries ; besides, he was satisfied with what he had heard ; it confirmed his own conjectures. According to his opinion, a woman who talked frequently and with deep emotion about the "dear departed," had usually tormented him to death ; while one who maintained a rigid silence about her connubial felicity, had been ill-treated. He begged the maid to tell her mistress that he would be ready for her at any hour that suited her convenience. The French woman, glancing at the clock, replied that madame would probably ring immediately ; she rarely slept later than noon ; but she did not venture to knock, although a letter had arrived which probably contained important news, as His Excellency, the General, had ordered her to give it to the baroness at once.

William Schulze bowed, and, after again begging her not to forget his message, took his leave.

"*Un monsieur très bien élevé, quoique Allemand,*" thought the maid, taking up her work again ; she liked him much better than the professor, who had something about him which utterly precluded the idea that he would ever enter into a confidential conversation with a waiting-maid. But, after all, that is madame's affair. And she was devoted to her mistress, who, although prone to fits

of temper, always made up for them by lavish gifts and redoubled kindness. A bell rang loudly, and Cécile started up.

“Open the blinds, Cécile,” said Andy, stretching herself sleepily.

The radiant noonday sun flooded the room and wove a web of golden rays over the unbound hair. The young widow had half risen from her bed, and, resting her white arm on the pillows, was rubbing her sleepy eyes; her cheeks were flushed, and the lace-trimmed night-dress, which had slipped from her shoulders, revealed the graceful outlines of the delicate neck. The charming head sank lazily back again, and the little mouth parted in a prolonged yawn.

“Bring my tea, Cécile; I will breakfast in bed.”

“There is a letter for madame.”

“A letter? Give it to me.” She lazily extended her hand. One glance at the address was enough. She sprang out upon the floor, and cried, in a curt, imperious tone: “Make haste! Do you suppose I don’t mean to get up at all to-day? Quick! get my stockings, my slippers, my dressing-gown——”

The maid hastily obeyed these commands. When the baroness clenched her teeth upon her lips and contracted

her delicate brows, her servants flew to execute her orders and did not venture to make any reply.

Cécile had scarcely left the room, when Andy threw herself into a chair beside the window and carefully examined the letter. She read the address, which ran as follows: *à Madame la Baronne Andy de Valmont*, and looked at the seal, which displayed a coat-of-arms surmounted by a count's coronet. It seemed to cost her an effort to break it. She caught up the almanac lying on the table. "The time will be over in four weeks," she murmured gloomily. "So soon! I must have been mistaken in supposing the interval of liberty would last longer. And now I must, I must decide."

She tore the envelope open. The external form of the letter was faultless, the thickest English paper, the hand firm, though not flowing—the writer probably did not often guide a pen—the pages written only on one side. Andy noticed all this in spite of her feverish agitation; then she began to read.

"If he wrote it himself," she murmured, after she had perused the contents and was pacing hastily up and down the room, "he at least understands how to express himself clearly and positively. Short, curt sentences, and yet no arrogance of tone! Not a word of love,

thank Heaven! Merely a statement of facts. I cannot deny that his conduct in this affair has been considerate and gentlemanly—he has neither intruded upon me, nor troubled himself about my actions. It is useless—I must, I must! And Walter!” she cried with a sudden sob. “I love him so dearly, so dearly. But we can never marry, we should both be miserable. I should stifle in his narrow circle, and he would torment himself with the thought that I was deprived of a thousand things, which have become necessities to me. If I were free and in possession of the property I now purchase with my own person, I would choose him alone. But he would be too proud to consent. He once said: ‘You will enter my life, not I yours; the man builds the house in which he lives, not the woman.’ But if the house is a little hut? Love, they say, transfigures everything!” She shook her head. “Is it my fault that my soul cannot rise to this lofty flight? Wealth exerts a wondrous spell; whatever is touched by the golden staff is transformed from sober gray into a thousand gleaming hues. One can breathe so freely in spacious, elegantly adorned rooms; it is so comfortable to travel through the world in first-class carriages; one sweeps so joyously through fields and woods on a noble

steed. I need only cry, 'Open Sesame!' and the splendors of the world will lie before me. If I should leave this wondrous country with the thought, that I could never return, or at least only after the lapse of years, I should carry with me a hopeless yearning. And if I were constantly compelled to repeat: 'you must not have that, your limited means forbid it'—I should cease to be myself, grow old and cross, and my laugh would be hushed. When birds of paradise are stripped of their bright plumage, they are no more charming than an ugly crow. I may be terribly vain in cherishing such thoughts, and yet I allow them to influence my actions! I shall lose Walter; I feel he will never forgive me for not having had the courage to belong to him entirely or utterly renounce him!"

She threw herself into the chair again, and wept and sobbed so passionately that the discreet Cécile, who came in with the breakfast, closed the door again to give her mistress time to recover her composure. Andy rarely wept, but when her tears did flow, they gushed forth like a torrent and exerted the same soothing influence upon her soul that a deep sleep exercised on her body.

At the end of an hour the bell rang again, and the maid entered with as unconscious a manner, as if she

had not been standing just outside the door listening and sighing: "My poor young mistress!"

Andy was one of the few women, whom weeping does not disfigure, no matter how her tears burned, her eyes neither lost their lustre, grew red around the edges, nor became swollen. Her beauty was indestructible—perhaps because her feelings never took deep root in her heart.

The only token by which the clever Cécile perceived that her mistress had had a severe struggle, was the latter's silence, which formed a striking contrast to the lively conversation she usually maintained with the confidential servant. While the Frenchwoman was brushing the soft hair and rolling it into heavy curls, she said:

"A Monsieur Schulze, a painter I believe, came here to see madame, but I told him you were still asleep."

"Herr Schulze? Oh! yes." The shadow of a smile played around the small mouth.

"What did he want?"

"First to inquire how madame felt after yesterday evening—*la soirée d'hier, qui était superbe*"—she interposed. Mademoiselle Cécile had also seen the tarantella, and been extremely flattered by the admiration bestowed upon her mistress. "Then he said something

about a sitting—he doesn't speak French very well—which madame had promised him—and he would expect madame in the course of the afternoon in his studio."

"He wants to paint me."

"Oh! *c'est autre chose!* madame will be too tired," she added cautiously, "I have already prepared the gentleman for a refusal, by telling him that you might not feel well enough to leave your room before dinner."

"No, no, I will keep my word; these gentlemen have spared neither time nor trouble for my amusement, and I can at least do them the trifling favor to let them reproduce my eyes, my nose, or some other portion of my face in a picture. And then tell me, Cécile, what am I to do, shut up within the four walls of this room? One grows melancholy when one is alone!"

"That is true," replied the maid thoughtfully, "madame has no amusements here, there are no shops where one can make purchases, and one can't ride, since there are neither carriages nor horses on this queer island."

"I don't think I shall remain here a month; I did not suppose it would be so monotonous."

"Madame would die of weariness," replied Cécile, who had no taste for the beauties of nature.

"Oh! no, ma bonne Cécile, I have seen very little of

Capri. I have not yet been to Faraglioni or the Blue Grotto; I shall let Giacinta row me around the whole island to-morrow."

"If the storm subsides, or it would be dangerous; madame cannot hear it rage in this room."

"A stormy passage would exactly suit me, I am not afraid and shall not be sea-sick."

Cécile did not agree with her mistress in this respect, she was very timid and always paid the sea its tribute as soon as she entered a ship.

"I should like to know," said Andy, "what the strangers who live here do, when bad weather interrupts all intercourse with Sorrento and Naples for days."

"I believe, madame," the maid ventured to remark; "that not many persons of distinction will remain here longer. Only artists and such people, who are obliged to work and can continue their occupations either in good or bad weather."

This was a clever remark on the part of the maid.

"Work!" repeated the young baroness, "I might do something!"

"Madame has commenced a piece of embroidery, which I was ordered to pack—a screen with the family coat of arms."

“And afterwards I might make a lamp mat, by way of a change,” laughed Andy. “How entertaining!”

Cécile laughed too, she had kept about a dozen such pieces of work, on which her mistress had sewed very zealously for several days, and then never touched again. She knelt before her to button her little boots, while the young widow put the finishing touches to her toilette. To push back a curl or draw it lower over her forehead, fasten a flower or bow differently, raise the overskirt higher, or draw it back more closely—she alone possessed the secret of these trifles, which gave her toilette the peculiar grace that distinguished it.

“His Excellency ordered me to inform him as soon as you were dressed.”

“Where is grandpapa?”

“He took a long walk early this morning with one of the gentlemen, and is now with Madame la Générale, who has passed a very bad night.”

“You need not tell him; I will go to him.” She cast a glance at the long mirror, which in Italy is such an indispensable article of household furniture that it is to be found in the homes of even the poorest families, and the vision that met her gaze might well have satisfied her.

CHAPTER XVI

THE room occupied by the general's wife was pervaded by a dim light; the old lady had had very little pleasure from the journey to Italy: almost always an invalid, she could not endure the slightest fatigue, and was obliged to deny herself every amusement. Fortunately she felt these deprivations very little. If she had a comfortable arm-chair and her companion a pleasant voice for reading aloud, she asked nothing more, and allowed her husband and granddaughter to amuse themselves undisturbed. She was reclining in an arm-chair, and the general sat at the only window whose blinds were not closed; he held in his hand the newspaper that had arrived by the last mail, and was telling his wife the most important items.

This lady was not endowed with any superfluous warmth of feeling; she loved her relatives "sensibly," as she expressed it, and had not been remarkably tender either as a wife or mother; while her increasing ill health had caused a diminution even in the originally small stock of affection.

When, after the death of her only son, the orphaned Andy came to her house, she had received the child that bore her name, and was already irresistibly charming, with all the love of which her nature was capable; governesses and masters were engaged, and dresses prepared after the latest fashion; but she often sighed over the confusion the little one caused in her household. She had lived many years with her husband in undisturbed comfort, and now, in her old age, was burdened with the care and responsibility of a child! For her granddaughter's sake, broken ties must be renewed; she was obliged to return to society, open her house to young people, and moreover, Andy's volatile, self-willed nature hourly overleaped the barriers imposed upon it, and disturbed the quiet of the household. The family expenses were also largely increased, and the general's limited means made this increase sensibly felt. She had therefore rejoiced when Baron Von Valmont offered himself to Andy, almost before she had entered society. Her future now seemed secured. Valmont's health at that time gave no cause for serious apprehension; he possessed much good sense and firmness of character, and would know how to guide his young wife. The grandmother was very well satisfied when Andy, with childish

carelessness, said it did not matter *whom* she married. Love *before* marriage was not necessary; it would come afterwards. Madame Von Willberg had learned that in her own person; she would have indignantly rejected the reproach that she had left the happiness of the child intrusted to her care entirely to chance. How the marriage, concluded with such astonishing indifference, afterwards resulted, she had never realized; to be sure, she never made any great effort to search anything to its depths.

It was a misfortune which it would have been wholly impossible to foresee, that Baron Von Valmont's ill health soon assumed a very serious character; but he remained the same agreeable, polished man of the world, who understood the most subtle shades of conversation, and troubled no one with complaints. He generally granted his young wife an almost unlimited freedom, paid her bills without even making a wry face, indulged her most extravagant fancies, and was not jealous when young men thronged around her—in a word, he was a pattern husband.

Andy had now and then made a remark which implied that she was dissatisfied with her condition, but she was naturally prone to exaggeration, and her grandmother

soothed herself with a "It will all come out right." One day, when the young wife rushed to her in the greatest agitation, and with floods of tears protested that she would never go back to her husband, with whom she had led a life of torment, the old lady gave her a most edifying discourse upon the troubles of this world, which must be borne with dignity. The wise words exerted an admirable effect; Andy ceased weeping, put on the hat she had tossed into a corner, and with lips compressed, answered: "You are right, grandmamma; there is no other happiness than to live as well and elegantly as possible—as I can do that, I am of course to be envied rather than pitied." So saying, she disappeared as hastily as she had come, and her grandmother afterwards heard that she had driven around the city and purchased a quantity of costly trifles.

This outburst of despair was not repeated, and her lips never again uttered a word of complaint. The old lady satisfied herself with the conjecture that the scene had resulted from some little dispute with the baron, an event by no means unusual between a married couple. Only when, at her husband's death, Andy's conduct was so singular, when she did not even shed the tears demanded by decorum, and could scarcely be persuaded to

put on mourning, a faint suspicion dawned upon her that this marriage had been darkened by something more than mere trifling differences of opinion. But everything was over now, and she forbore asking questions that might have led to painful disclosures.

The quiet of the Von Willberg household was disturbed a second time, when the young widow returned to her grandparents' home. Fortunately there were no difficulties in regard to money-matters, for Andy had the disposal of a large portion of the income from the Valmont property, and the increased expenses were defrayed by her alone. She had her own carriages and servants. Her grandmother, however, attached very little importance to these things, as her bodily health required nothing but rest and quiet. In spite of Andy's entreaties, she would never have consented to the journey to Italy if the former had not won over the physician, who ordered the invalid to spend the winter in the South. The general was much more vigorous and active; he enjoyed the changing scenes of the foreign country, and, although his interest in art was very slight, made no objection to occasionally spending a few hours in galleries or museums. The notice his beautiful granddaughter always attracted flattered his vanity, and he was

at all times ready to be her escort. Andy's quick intelligence and promptness in decision gave her a decided advantage over the kindly, but not remarkably brilliant old gentleman.

With the philosophical: "She does what she chooses," the grandparents patiently yielded to all Andy's capricious ideas and fancies.

As she now entered the room and kissed her grandmother's hand,—an outward token of respect which consoled the old lady for her total want of authority—the general glanced over the top of his paper and hemmed significantly. He was dying with curiosity to hear certain news, but the elf had trained the brave soldier so well that he would not have ventured to interfere with her affairs of his own accord. Questions that did not please her were answered with a contemptuous curl of the lip, a half-astonished, half-angry contraction of the brows, which instantly reduced the bold interlocutor to silence.

"Thanks, my child, I am the same as usual. I feel no benefit from the strengthening sea breeze," said the old lady. "Did you enjoy yourself yesterday? I should have liked to come into the hall for an hour if I had not

feared the light and dust would injure my eyes. Grandpapa was very enthusiastic on his return."

"Yes, it was wonderful," replied Andy, with sparkling eyes; "I never enjoyed dancing so much as with these island girls."

"Shut the blinds; grandpapa is not reading, and the light is too bright for me—— I think, to tell the truth, that it was not exactly proper for you to have joined the dance."

"Everything is allowable in travelling."

"I am not reproving you; I have long ceased to do so. I am merely expressing my opinion—I do not think it proper."

"I do."

"Have you received a letter?" cried the general, who could no longer control his impatience.

"Yes," replied Andy, laconically.

"And?"

"It was from the count," she said carelessly, drawing the gold chain of her watch through her fingers."

"Have you decided?" asked the old lady.

"I must, since the time named in the will is rapidly approaching."

"Yes or no?"

"Yes!"

"Thank God!" exclaimed the old lady in delight.

"This exclamation only applies to the prospect of getting rid of me and all the annoyances that follow in my train," said Andy, bitterly; "for my decision to marry, for mere worldly considerations, a man whom I neither love nor esteem, cannot possibly gratify you."

"You are unjust to the count. One of the handsomest gentlemen in the capital, who at one time was not indifferent to you—I think it was very unselfish in Valmont to choose him for your husband."

"A piece of unselfishness about which I have my own opinion," she answered gloomily.

"He is a brave officer," said the general, taking up the song of praise; "an excellent rider and thorough judge of horse-flesh."

"The latter would be important, if I owned a circus," replied the young widow, haughtily.

"I only mean to say," answered the old gentleman, good-naturedly, "that he is quite a different person from that paralyzed Valmont—perhaps he has less intellect, but you have so much of that commodity yourself that it will be enough for him also. Why you assert that you do not esteem him, I can't understand. I have

never heard anything derogatory to his character, or I would not persuade you to marry him."

"He has a brutal nature, and would always love a woman as if she were a lorette,—and he drinks."

"Nonsense!" cried the general, angrily; "because you once saw him a little excited at a wedding in the country, where, as is well known, the wine-bottles were not removed from the table for three days, you fancy he is a drunkard!"

"He inspired me at that time with a repugnance I have never conquered since."

"Then I am surprised that you accepted the ornament he sent you from Paris a short time ago," observed her grandmother, dryly.

Andy blushed. "I did not think of the giver when I received it. It would have been very ceremonious to have returned——"

"And you were so much pleased with it. Besides, the count had a right to send the gift, since for two years you have been the same as betrothed to him. You have had time to become accustomed to the relation——"

"I have taken the greatest trouble to ignore it," cried Andy, vehemently; "I wanted to enjoy my freedom for these two years without any unpleasant reminiscences—

And I have succeeded," she added in a lower tone; "I had so entirely forgotten the period when I must make my decision, that the count's letter first recalled it to my mind."

"Reconcile yourself to the inevitable, and it will not seem so unpleasant. You have not seen Malte for several years; he has undoubtedly improved. As he has been assigned as military attaché to the legation at Paris, his manners, which even in former days did not lack polish, have doubtless improved."

"I have no doubt he has improved in his mode of conducting flirtations."

"You need not reproach him for that; you have accepted the attentions of others, and did not feel bound by any ties. Where is the count now?"

"I don't know; the letter is dated at Geneva, and must have been detained on the way."

"Then he will soon follow it."

"No," cried Andy, impetuously; "I will not allow that! I would go away at once with Cécile. I can't meet him here!" Her voice trembled.

"How can people be so undecided!" said the old lady, disapprovingly; "you were at liberty to choose some

one else. Sir Francis offered you his hand; why did you refuse him?"

"Because I did not love him, and cannot bear Englishmen."

"You make exaggerated, romantic demands upon men; there are few who find favor in your eyes. Professor Erichsen is the only one who has succeeded in interesting you, and even that is mere caprice, for hitherto you have avoided rather than sought the society of learned men. If it had not been utterly impossible to consider him a suitor, the remarkable favor you have shown him would already have given rise to gossip. You were inseparable in Rome."

"A perfectly safe friendship," observed the sharp-sighted general. "Andy is only amused by his conversation, and he thinks of nothing but his studies."

"Your apology is unnecessary," Andy interrupted, with glowing cheeks; "the professor is far superior to all the gentlemen who call themselves my admirers, and under the ægis of this title bore me to death."

"He certainly possesses plenty of intellect," replied the old lady, with the immovable composure that she always opposed to her granddaughter's vivacity; "it is his profession to be intelligent, but that is no sufficient

basis for a livelihood, to say nothing of the fact, that as his wife you would be obliged to leave the society in which, though you often laugh at it, you best like to move. Birds of a feather flock together, is a good old saying, which we cannot too carefully heed. Valmont habituated you to extravagance; you do not know what it is to save. If you refuse the count, you can only wed a very rich man, as you have no property of your own; so it would still be a marriage of convenience."

"I have duly considered all this," replied Andy impatiently; "if I were not driven to this step by absolute necessity, if I could have discovered any means of escape, I should have said No long ago."

"You lift a burden from my heart, little one," said the old general, who was fondly attached to his charming granddaughter; "only yesterday evening I was anxiously thinking what would become of you, if I should die and you and grandmamma were obliged to live on her widow's pension and the trifling income from my small property. Ah! child, if nature ever destined any one for a princess, it was you; I can't imagine you in any other situation than that of rolling through life in your own carriage."

"It shall be done!" she exclaimed, suddenly bursting

into a merry laugh and throwing both arms around her grandfather's neck; "as soon as we return to the capital, I'll have a high gig built with only one seat for me and one for the groom behind; two Arabian horses are already purchased, and I'll drive myself."

"Probably in order to upset the vehicle and break your neck," observed the general's wife.

"We are always in danger of losing our lives by an accident," replied the young widow carelessly.

"Have you answered the count?"

"No, I don't know his address, as he must have left Geneva. Besides, it would be unnecessary; as I should not delay in writing a refusal, he will not despair, and the Yes always comes soon enough."

"The uncertainty will torture him—you have no heart—at least not for those who ought to be nearest to you."

"You may be right, grandmamma—why was not that organ more carefully developed? A few days of discomfort won't hurt the count. I too am not on a bed of roses!"

She bit her under lip and pressed both hands upon her temples, then sprang lightly to her feet. "I must go to Herr Schulze's studio, he asked me to sit to him for

a picture he is going to paint for the great exhibition, and for which he needs a model with red hair and green eyes. As I have both—" She made a curtsy to her mirror—she well knew the alluring power of the "red hair and green eyes."

"You are old enough——"

"Twenty-seven," she interposed.

"To need no control, but I must not conceal from you that I do not approve of this plan."

"The portrait, which was painted of me four years ago, hung in the exhibition for several months."

"That was a very different matter. The Baroness Von Valmont's portrait, with her husband's consent, was placed in a hall with the pictures of the royal family. Here the point in question is some ideal subject, to which you lend your features."

"A mermaid!"

"Andy, I don't understand you—in such a costume!"

"I believe there is no costume at all," cried the wilful imp; "at the utmost, a garland of reeds in the hair and a pearl bracelet around the arm. How comical it will be, when acquaintances, passing through the exhibition, pause and exclaim, 'Pon honor, the Baroness Valmont, feature for feature!' Others will reply, 'The likeness'—"

people never agree on that—‘is not so striking; it is merely in the color of the hair.’—‘No, those are her eyes; that is her profile!’—‘Excuse me, how is that possible? she has a totally different nose!’ And so the dispute will continue. I am only sorry I cannot be there to hear it.”

“You are incorrigible. I hope you won’t go to this Herr Schulze alone.”

“Heaven forbid! I always observe the proprieties. I asked Fraulein Stösser to accompany me.” She glided out of the room, and then paused a moment to pass her handkerchief across her eyes. “For shame, Andy; you have shed your tears, now submit. Time dulls the sharpest sorrow; we need only wait. To-day, to-morrow and many more days, I can see Walter and enjoy his society in the old way. Why should I confess what would separate him from me? I will put a rose in his room; it will tell him I have thought of him, longed for him—my dear, dear Walter!” And the strange little creature forced back the rising tears, that burned hotly in her eyes.

CHAPTER XVII.

WILLIAM SCHULZE was wandering from one end of the studio to the other in great excitement, trying to "clear up," a proceeding his friends accompanied with sarcastic remarks.

"A bootjack!" he indignantly exclaimed, holding the article directly under Endymion's nose.

"Throw it into the bed-room with the other things," replied the latter, without interrupting his work.

"And here is a toothbrush," said Schulze; "and moreover one that shows traces of long use! The sense of order and decency is very highly developed in you; when we expect lady-visitors, the studio ought not to resemble an Augean stable. You have missed the ennobling influence of feminine society in your youth, the only time when man is capable of education."

"I don't suffer from weak nerves, William," replied Uncle Bräsig, "or I might suddenly fall from my chair in a fainting fit. The atmosphere you have made by sprinkling Cologne and other perfumes around the room,

is perfectly horrible. I would advise you to use vinegar and camphor, that every odor may be represented."

"Do you suppose I will expose the baroness to the smell of your tobacco?"

"Well, I'm sure the odors I smell might make any one ill."

"Shall I open the window?"

"I protest against it," cried Endymion, energetically; "I am sitting next it and can't bear a draught."

"I rely upon you, my young friend, to take charge of Fraulein Stösser."

"I have no intention of doing any such thing."

"Where is your practical nature? Even the most insignificant pen may become a power now-a-days. Let us suppose that she writes an article about one of your moonlight pictures, only one; it will be reprinted in various papers; your portrait will appear in an illustrated journal, accompanied by a biographical sketch, which will record several touching incidents of your childhood; how, for instance, even when in your mother's arms, you stretched your little hands longingly towards the moon, and similar things. The consequence would be that the English and Americans would say 'he must be a famous man, for his portrait is in the papers!' They would

besiege your studio and pay fabulous sums for the first quarter, as well as the half and full moon."

The object of Schulze's raillery silently shrugged his shoulders.

Pietro, the hard-worked cameriere, suddenly threw the door open and announced the ladies, who were received with great courtesy. William Schulze exhausted himself in expressions of gratitude to the baroness for having deigned to grant his request.

"And you too, honored Fraulein," he continued, turning to Camilla Stösser, "are a most welcome guest; yesterday, unfortunately, circumstances—imperious circumstances—forbade me to invite you to enter."

"I am reproaching myself for having disturbed this young lady in the midst of a literary inspiration," said Andy mischievously; "but she was kind enough to forgive the interruption."

Schulze turned to the baroness. "Before I condemn you to the torture of sitting still, madame, I should like to escort you around our workshop, that you may make the acquaintance of your devoted slaves in their artistic characters. Permit me to begin with my fair-haired friend, who has nearly completed the picture on his easel—a sketch of the Campagna, an arch of the ruined

aqueduct by moonlight. Notice, if you please, the wonderfully delicate and transparent treatment of the atmosphere, the poetical, sentimental tone that pervades the whole scene. But beware of drawing the inference that he has a poetic nature; he is thoroughly prosaic and practical; it is only his brush that inclines towards enthusiasm—a perplexing dualism in this artist-soul. Within a short time love seems to have stirred in his heart; he is often absorbed in his own thoughts—reads Geibel. In a word, something occupies his mind.” He cast a significant glance at Fraulein Stösser, and the worthy lady did him the favor to blush.

“My friend from Mecklenburg is the exact opposite of Endymion. One is slender; the other stout! Uncle Bräsig, who, as an artist, pays homage to a stern, harsh realism—look at the exquisite group, the little girl and the old grandmother roasting chestnuts. Uncle Bräsig, as a man, possesses a tenderness and warmth of feeling usually peculiar to women. When he heard the notes of the harmonica, at the Christmas festival given by the artists in Rome, tears of emotion rolled down his cheeks; he squanders large sums to secretly procure articles of food that remind him of his childhood; spoiled roast geese and hard marchpane cost him a large annual sum. If

any countrywoman, who speaks pure low German, should be left here a widow or orphan, I am confident he would marry her out of sympathy."

"After giving such admirable descriptions of our characters, we are curious to hear how you will sketch yourself," said Uncle Bräsig. "At any rate, we will be ready to correct, if you put on the colors too lightly."

"Have no fear; you won't be called upon to help. I, madame, am from head to foot a true son of our modern times, hating everything vague and old, and loving even the excrescences of our present society."

"With a strong predilection for cafés chantants, suburban theatres and public masquerades," interposed Uncle Bräsig.

"I have devoted myself to the world of fairy tales and legends. I paint elves, mermaids and sleeping beauties with eagerness and success, and often laugh at the thought of the contrast between my work and my character. Young ladies, who see my pictures, usually imagine me a pious German youth with long waving hair and a Byron collar, a Fridolin, kneeling at his mistress's feet. I can't help it. There, madame, now you have a description of our characters, and we can set to work. May I ask?"

Andy sat down, and as Schulze modestly expressed his wishes, drew out the comb that confined her hair, which instantly fell around her like a glittering cloak.

Mephistopheles was a totally different person when at work; his keen intellect, which manifested itself in constant witticisms, did not correspond with the slow, cautious strokes, each one of which was made with the utmost care and deliberation.

"You have very singular eyes, madame," he said, bending forward and gazing intently at the sparkling orbs, somewhat as a jeweller examines a precious stone; "they possess the capacity of reflecting every feeling, every emotion, without needing any increased agitation of the soul—it is like the flashing of the diamond. Yet I would declare that you could not look vacant or indifferent: you are not to blame for the wonderful power of your eyes."

"That must be true," replied the young widow; "for I remember that when a child people often said: 'What eyes you are making!' when I was merely looking quietly before me."

Fraulein Stösser had timidly asked Endymion, whether she might watch him while he painted; it always interested her to see the process of creating anything.

Whether Schulze's careless remark about the power of a woman's pen had produced an impression on the practical mind of the fair-haired artist, or whether Camilla's enthusiastic admiration of his talent flattered him, I know not; but he behaved far more politely and cordially than usual, and even started up to move her chair close beside his easel.

Nothing more touchingly expresses the strength of a woman's love, than her total loss of judgment where the object of her affection is concerned. Fraulein Stösser had often come in contact with talented artists, and the society of Gertrude, with whom she had wandered through the galleries of Rome, had trained her eye; she was capable of distinguishing really good pictures from those whose merit was mediocre.

If the artist had not been Endymion, for whom her heart throbbed with a tender feeling, she would undoubtedly have perceived that the picture was marred by mannerism, and his skill was only sufficient to conceal its faults by certain striking effects. "Pictures painted to sell to strangers," she would have expressed it. But she did not notice the defects; she was honestly delighted, and gave utterance to this delight in words. Endymion had not yet found such faith anywhere—

Schulze and Uncle Bräsigg thought it a friendly duty to jeer at him pitilessly—this enthusiastic appreciation pleased him; the conversation which at first had been conducted in loud tones, gradually sank to whispers, a fact to which William Schulze, by droll grimaces and signs, did not fail to call the baroness's attention.

Uncle Bräsigg glanced at the two couples and muttered: "I am the only one who is alone, all alone—and I am perfectly satisfied." Fate seemed to wish to alleviate this solitude; for Gertrude, after tapping lightly at the door, appeared on the threshold.

"This is the first time our studio has been so honored," said Schulze; "you have hitherto disdained to visit your colleagues."

The artist had fortunately laid aside her ugly straw hat, her face was somewhat flushed by the long walk, and the heightened color was very becoming to the pale brunette.

"I have a request to make," she said, greeting the party with a slight bend of the head.

"It is granted already!" declaimed Schulze.

"You need not always speak for us, Mephistopheles," replied Uncle Bräsigg angrily.

"I want to stretch a new canvas, and have no small nails."

"All you desire are at your disposal," exclaimed the corpulent Uncle Bräsig, rushing into the next room with wonderful agility.

"Where have you been?" asked Camilla; "I went to your door in vain."

"I have been making landscape studies to-day."

"Where?" asked Andy turning towards her.

"On the Punta di Mitromania," Gertrude hesitatingly replied.

"Professor Erichsen's jealously guarded study!" laughed the baroness. "So you have had a tête-à-tête—how dangerous!"

"I do not think I am one of the ladies who are dangerous to the Herr Professor," Gertrude answered proudly; "we both worked busily and took very little notice of each other."

"And where is he? Did he not return to the albergo with you?" asked Andy, who took a malicious pleasure in irritating the grave, calm girl.

"I left before Herr Erichsen; he was going down to the Marina."

"How ungallant of him to let you return alone!"

"I desire no gallantry from gentlemen, madame ; I ask only respect."

"The latter does not preclude the former," said Andy smiling ; "you must not take it so seriously."

She rose and declared that she was tired. William Schulze thought he would only require two sittings at the utmost, as the picture was not to be a portrait, and the point in question was only a few characteristic details, which he could finish in the model's absence.

Meantime Uncle Bräsig had brought Gertrude the nails, and eagerly offered to stretch the canvas. She thanked him, but declined his assistance; and after hastily glancing at the artists' work and making a few clever and cautious remarks, left the room, followed in a few moments by Andy and Fraulein Stösser. Schulze paced up and down the studio, rubbing his hands, which with him was always a sign of secret satisfaction.

"It works, it works," he whispered to the worthy Uncle Bräsig, when Endymion had left the room.

"What?"

"They will be betrothed, the authoress and he, of whom she dreams."

"You are dreaming yourself!"

"No, no! There is nothing easier than to bring two vain people together. One need only inspire them with

the conviction that each has the highest opinion of the other, and the thing gradually takes care of itself."

"Then you have accomplished a fine piece of work. Have you no conscience?"

"My dear fellow, I believe I shall secure the happiness of both—she has property, and at the utmost is only a few years older than he; she will adore him with the boundless gratitude of an old maid who has found a husband at the eleventh hour. He will love her like a pacha, and become a comfortable, tolerably egotistical married man and master of the house. I'll wager that I give them my blessing before I leave Capri."

"If you are so successful in matchmaking, suppose you take charge of mine too. Tell Fraulein Gertrude what a deep respect I feel for her; perhaps she would be touched by it."

"I wanted to ask the same service of you, Uncle Bräsig," grinned Mephistopheles; "we both have most sensible tastes. I could be madly in love with the baroness with the nixie eyes, but I would marry only the quiet one. It would be very charming to watch her grave face gradually brighten. Besides, we have very little chance, my dear friend; she can't endure me, and is utterly indifferent to you. We will mutually save each other from suicidal fancies."

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOON after Gertrude had left the Punta, Walter also set out on his way home. He hoped Andy would meet him, since this would have afforded the best possible opportunity for him to see the wilful sprite alone and compel her to give him a decisive answer. When he reached the spot where he had discovered the white figure the day before, he found it empty,—so she had not waited for him. Somewhat disappointed, he leaned over the low wall and gazed down the winding path; perhaps she might come still! He could see nothing except a donkey laden with luggage, which two brown-faced girls were urging onward with blows and encouraging words, and at some distance a gentleman, who was wearily climbing the steep ascent. Walter looked more intently—was it not Von Linden? Yes, as the stranger paused and removed his hat to wipe the perspiration from his brow, he recognised him. Not with pleasure! The worthy man had never done him any injury, but he

would not leave Andy's side ; he belonged to a world from which Erichsen wished to tear her ; he undoubtedly brought any quantity of news, and would fill her little head with empty gossip, which was none the more valuable because the names had an aristocratic sound.

Herr Von Linden, whose eyes were roving inquiringly around, perceived the figure leaning over the wall, sprang forward, and waved his handkerchief.

"Professor, some lucky star brings me to you. Wait a moment ; I'll be with you directly."

And he toiled with fresh energy after the donkey, which had already obtained a considerable start. Walter could not help pretending to be very much pleased at the encounter ; they shook hands warmly, and Von Linden clung to his friend's arm.

"How did you get here?" asked Erichsen ; "the steamer only arrives at noon."

"From Massa, in a boat," was the melancholy reply ; "and *such* a passage ! I am cured for life of all desire to be tossed about in a skiff ! The waves played football with us ; now we were on one side, now the other, now up, now down. And, unluckily, I am easily made sea-sick. If I had not taken a bottle of old cognac with me, I should have given up the ghost."

“Why did you choose such a means of transit in stormy weather?”

“A poetic fancy, my dear fellow, which between ourselves must always be paid for. When I set out, there was merely a strong breeze blowing, the color of the sea was very bright, and I anticipated a delightful passage. Thank God! I have firm ground under my feet once more! Besides, I was obliged to protect the baroness's property from the waves: a very small portion of the luggage you see yonder belongs to me. I am bringing the band-boxes and packages left behind in Naples. Are the Von Willbergs at the Albergo Nazionale?”

Walter gave an affirmative answer.

“And how is the Baroness Von Valmont? As charming as ever?”

“As ever.”

“The count is an enviable man to possess such a wife. You will probably soon make his acquaintance, as he will not remain long in Rome—his impatience is very natural.”

“Of whom do you speak?”

“Of Count Malte P., the betrothed husband of the baroness.”

“Baroness Von Valmont?” Walter paused and gazed at Von Linden incredulously.

“Certainly! The little siren has deceived and played hide and seek with us all; she has been engaged a long time. I would not tell any one else a word of this secret, which I only learned by accident, since she herself maintains the most obstinate silence; but you are a dear friend——”

“A dear friend,” repeated Erichsen mechanically. Every drop of blood receded to his heart, and the words he uttered seemed to suffocate him—now he knew that he had loved her unspeakably.

“The matter is not yet perfectly clear to me; at all events the baroness seems to yield to the force of circumstances, rather than act according to her own will. She is too clever not to submit; bewitching as she is, she would not easily find a suitable match. Even our wealthiest young men are compelled to choose women of property, because the expenses of living are daily increasing, and no one wants to economize. The baroness clearly perceives that among the throng of her admirers, the number of suitors is but small. The wealthy Englishman, Sir Francis, offered himself to her

in Rome, but she refused him because she says she should die of ennui in England——”

“ But the count, whom you just mentioned ?” Walter impatiently interrupted.

“ Listen, and you shall hear what I was told by a friend in Naples. The late Baron Von Valmont stated in his will, that if, after the expiration of two years, his widow did not marry his cousin, Count Malte P., the whole property was to revert to another branch of the family ; if she fulfilled his wish, it should remain in her exclusive possession and at her free disposal. I call that putting a pistol at her breast ! Yet Von Valmont was actuated by generous motives, and I am secretly inclined to beg his pardon for having considered him a heartless egotist. Some years ago the baroness evidently favored the count, and there were rumors of an ardent affection between them ; but on the young officer’s removal to another garrison the report died away, and the baroness seemed to feel no sorrow at the separation. Her husband, however, must have been convinced that her interest in the handsome cavalier had not died out, since he selected him for his successor. I think it was a very pretty attention on his part. But who would have expected such secrecy from the impetu-

ous little creature! She never betrayed it by a look, a word; no one suspected that she was betrothed. She wanted to thoroughly enjoy the freedom of widowhood, before she again allowed herself to be bound."

"Do you know the count?"

"Very slightly. I remember him as a remarkably handsome man, who looked like a Greek god on horseback, of whom various piquante adventures with actresses were told, and who incurred a great many debts. He is said to be madly in love with his charming betrothed, and humbly submits to all the capricious conditions she dictates. For instance, up to this time, she has never permitted him to approach her; for two long years the poor fellow has been obliged to content himself with admiring her picture. The wedding is to take place quietly at the end of six weeks; they are to be married somewhere away from home, and not return to the capital until the winter. We shall probably often meet at their house, Herr Professor; last winter the Von Willbergs gave little dinners every week, to which only their most intimate acquaintances were invited, and where the dishes were as exquisite as the conversation was animated."

Walter did not seem to be particularly overjoyed at the thought of the prospective pleasure, and answered

coldly that his profession gave him little time to devote to amusement.

“How does the baroness like this place?”

“I believe she is very well pleased.”

“A singular fancy, to want to spend a whole month at Capri—if she stays a week, it will be a long time. She suddenly grew weary of the gayety in Rome, made impertinent speeches to her most faithful admirers, declared she longed for rest and solitude, and one fine day disappeared. Don’t be surprised if she vanishes from here just as suddenly.”

“I am sufficiently well acquainted with the baroness to be always prepared for any surprise,” replied the other, breaking off a branch of laurel that hung over the wall.

“And how go matters with you? Are you already thinking of returning home?”

“Not yet; my leave of absence extends to the last of June.”

“And do you intend to remain on this rock until then? It is beautiful, but must be terribly monotonous.”

“My stay here is drawing to a close; I shall leave in a few days.”

“The little baroness will be terribly disappointed when she hears of this resolution. Where are you going?”

“Perhaps to Ischia, which I have not yet seen, or to one of the little towns among the mountains.”

“Indeed! I should like to accompany you, but I half promised the Von Willbergs to escort them to the other side of the Alps. Besides, I want to witness the first meeting between the baroness and her future husband. I am anxious to see how she who scoffs at all feeling will accommodate herself to the new relation.”

Meantime the gentlemen had reached the albergo, where willing hands had already relieved the donkey of his burden. Andy was leaning out of a window on the second story.

“How do you do, Herr Von Linden? You are welcome.”

The little man bowed, laid his hand on his heart, and burst into voluble greetings.

“How lovely she looks!” he whispered to the professor, who had removed his hat and fixed a cold, searching glance on the lady; “that complexion, that hair!”

“So you have been sea-sick,” laughed the elf. “Don’t ask me to pity you for the misfortune. Sea-sickness is ridiculous. Did you bring my band-boxes with you?”

"I defended them from the sea-water with my own body."

"I hope you didn't crush the lids; a mat would have been more practical."

"Ingratitude, too!" declaimed Von Linden.

"The world's reward, as you know! Come upstairs; Cécile will give you a cup of coffee, prepared by her own hands. Bring the silent professor, too; he apparently needs some refreshment. I shall expect you, gentlemen!"

She waved her white hand, cast a searching glance at Walter, and retreated from the window.

Von Linden went to his own room to rearrange his dress, which had been somewhat disordered by the passage; he told Erichsen that he would call for him to go to the Von Willbergs, to which the latter answered with a nod. When, on knocking at his door, he received no reply, he supposed that his friend had grown tired of waiting, and he should find him upstairs.

CHAPTER XIX.

WALTER had stepped out upon the loggia, and was pacing restlessly up and down with folded arms. . . How could she have so deceived him, and carried on the game up to the last moment! The more he thought of it, the more mysterious the little creature seemed! There was some demoniacal power in her nature, which constantly urged her on to destruction. She who for years had suffered under the curse of an unhappy marriage, was about to submit to the same fate a second time, merely because she could not dispense with external splendor. There was not such another mortal on earth! If this had been her whole character—but there were hours when a sudden longing for better things stirred within her, and she felt the loneliness of her existence with horror. . . Count Malte—her dead husband's cousin—he could be no other than the man of whom she had told him, for whom she felt such a deep, invincible repugnance. “The handsome groom!” as she contemptuously called him. There were contra-

dictions in her character which he could not understand. He would fain have hated her for having so wantonly crossed his path, but he could not do it. It was the nobler portion of her nature which had drawn her towards him; she was to be pitied rather than condemned. . . . This roguish Puck, this faithless little nixie! How long it would be ere he could forget the sweet dream she had woven around him! He leaned on the balustrade of the loggia and gazed at the fiery sunset, which crimsoned the rocky cliffs. And when, in future years, he thought of this favored land, where heaven itself seemed to have descended upon the earth, the alluring figure with the mysterious eyes would ever arise before him—in the Pitti Palace, where she shook back the golden hair stolen from the pictures of Titian's women—on the silent Campagna, where she came flitting towards him like a dragon-fly—and at Capri, where she sat on the giddy height, with her little feet coquettishly crossed and a thoughtful expression on her mobile features,—no, it would be vain to try to banish these memories.

“Walter!” The tone was so pleading! Could it belong to the same voice that laughed so mockingly?

He turned. There she stood before him, her charm-

ing face pale and sad, her arms hanging by her side, her eyes fixed with a timid, beseeching expression upon his face.

“I know you have learned from Von Linden what I wished to spare you. Do not condemn without having heard me.”

He leaned against the pillar without taking a step towards her. She did not seem to dare to advance.

“What was the necessity of the deception, the falsehood, Andy?” he said, after a pause, while her long lashes were still cast down. “Could you not honestly confess that you were too weak, too cowardly, to descend to an humbler sphere of life?”

“Then you would have left me, ceased to love me, and I could not bear it!”

“What have you gained?” he eagerly exclaimed. “Must we not still part? You, the betrothed bride of another——”

“Do not call me that,” she answered, with sudden passion. “I became so only by compulsion. Do you remember my telling you that Valmont took a cruel revenge for a thoughtless remark? He desired, even after his death, to make sure that I should not compensate myself too fully for the tortures I had endured; his hard

cold hand stretched from the grave a wall between me and happiness. I might have found it easier to enter into an alliance with a stranger. Good heavens! I have been taught to look upon marriage as something unavoidable, in which the principal point was a harmony in external circumstances. Valmont, however, has chosen the very person to whom I can never be reconciled, because he reminds me of a humiliation I have not yet forgotten—a man beside whom my soul must pine, if it does not cherish in its depths a treasure from which it can draw sustenance. The two years Valmont graciously accorded me as a reprieve, seemed to me an eternity. What might not happen in that time! The count or I might die. Why should I trouble myself about the future? The executor of the will sent the count a copy of the paragraph relating to him and myself. He was of course not disposed to relinquish a claim that threw a fortune into his lap. He declared that he still loved me to idolatry”—she shrugged her shoulders contemptuously—“and promised to yield to the conditions I imposed. I begged him to spare me his presence, and not trouble me with letters. Writing is not his favorite occupation”—a smile flitted over the little mouth—“so this request met with no opposition.

I always understood how to submit to a *fait accompli*. When I looked around the circle of my acquaintances, I found that in the end it was just the same whether people married with or without love; the result in both cases was courteous indifference or cold friendship. The husbands, who were loved with passionate devotion, became tyrants; the wives adored by their husbands egoists. As a general thing, human nature does not seem able to endure kind treatment for any length of time. No brilliant testimonial of its real quality! I should have liked best of all to remain free—a very natural desire with my love of independence and the experiences of my first marriage! Since that could not be, I must try to make the best of my position. With the count, I need not pretend that my acts are governed by the shadow of affection. Interest, commonplace interest unites us, and I shall be spared any farther explanations. We shall marry with the intention of interfering with each other as little as possible; although I bear his name and live under his roof, there will never be any *bond* between us.”

“But this is madness!” cried Walter, looking at the elfin figure with the childish face. “Such a condition of affairs is impossible! Do you really suppose that the

count will not know how to assert his rights as soon as he is your husband?"

"He will not!" she answered, with flashing eyes. "I have his word of honor. But let us say nothing about it. You have now learned that I consider this union as something purely external—a form that does not touch my inner life. My heart is free. I can give it to whom I please. Are you angry with me because I have lost it to you? When I first saw you in Florence, the earnest gravity of your features almost irritated me to try to shake that calm self-control. 'I will not allow myself to be played with,' was written on your brow." She smilingly raised her eyes to his. "A passing caprice, I fancied, attracted me towards you. I was no longer a child, and had had many experiences, so much attention had been paid to me. Why should I not, by way of a change, make the first advances? If you choose, it was coquetry, the wish to discover whether you, too, like the rest, would, after a short resistance, be forced to lay down your arms before my small person. I was mistaken in you, or rather, I underestimated you; you gave love little power over you. I could not discover how deep an impression I had produced. I always occupied the second place in your estimation; this vexed

me, made me sad, and I discovered that you had become dearer to me than any one had ever been. That is why I followed you to Rome, and was not happy until I found you on the Campagna, at the Casale Rotondo. Do you remember?" She played with her curls, and cast a glance of passionate love from beneath her long lashes. "Was I to tell you that my hand was not free, when I was not even sure you loved me? What a resolute expression rested upon your lips, and how impenetrable were your features! I felt as if I were no more than a beautiful flower, a brilliant butterfly. You thought me charming, and when you went home, no longer remembered me——"

He shook his head. "You are mistaken, Andy; I loved you very fondly. Did I not prove it when I asked you to share my fate?"

Her face grew scarlet with blushes. "Oh! that was in a moment of intoxication; we had both lost our senses."

"Why did you come here, if you had firmly resolved not to be my wife?"

"Why? A singular question! To see you, to speak to you, to breathe the same air with you!" she passionately exclaimed.

“And if chance had not thrown Herr Von Linden in my way, my eyes would still be bandaged. I returned home to-day with the intention of explaining my wishes to your grandfather. Did you never think of the painful embarrassment into which your—insincerity might plunge me?”

“That would not have happened; you would have spoken to me first, and I——”

“And you would have answered me as equivocally as when I questioned you about the bracelet.”

“If you could look into my heart, Walter, you would be convinced that it has room only for your image,” she answered mournfully.

“Words, Andy, in whose truth you perhaps believe at this moment. If it were so, would you hesitate to cease this miserable trifling, and seek a nobler happiness in a more humble sphere? Where is your pride? You hate your husband’s memory, and yet accept the wealth which—pardon the harsh expression—he left you under the most contemptuous conditions.”

“I have a right to it, and ought not to be cheated out of its possession,” she answered haughtily; “I receive no alms, for I purchased it by eight years of slavery.”

“Very well,” he answered almost impatiently; “let us

cease these discussions. You have not the courage to become the wife of a simple professor——”

“Because you would soon regret the step.”

“That would be my care. You have consented to become the Countess P——; so there is nothing left for me except to leave you.”

“Leave me!” she repeated, and rushing towards him she laid her hand imploringly upon his arm. “Take back those words, Walter; they rend my heart! What has changed for us? You hear that I have preserved my personal freedom—that I shall be the count’s wife only in name. I have relied on you, on your friendship; what prevents us from meeting each other in the old way? I shall receive you in my house with the same pleasure that I welcomed you every evening in Rome.”

“That your husband may show me the door? It is the obstinacy of the child, who does not wish to part with its plaything, that makes you speak so. Recollect yourself, Andy.”

“You will leave me entirely—you will not seek me out?”

“I give you my word of honor that I will not. On the contrary, I shall avoid meeting you.”

"Oh! if I could only die!" she murmured in a voice choked with tears.

"You are far too fond of life for that."

She clenched her hands convulsively. "Not even in this hour of parting do you lose your cool composure."

"I will leave the question of who suffers most unsettled," said Walter.

"Have I not been a totally different person to you from the woman the world knows? Go; you are ungrateful!"

"You are convinced that you have treated me honestly?"

"Certainly; I was sincere in my heart, and that is the only standard."

"That remark almost borders on Jesuitism."

"Oh! that Von Linden, that insufferable gossip!" she angrily exclaimed; "he has robbed me of a month's happiness. But for him, we should have remained friends."

Erichsen shrugged his shoulders. There was a steel-like obstinacy in her character, which hardened itself against all reasoning. The grave questions of life, duty, honesty, she gazed at with the eyes of a child, and did not comprehend.

"You will be responsible if I commit any folly," she said defiantly, wiping away her tears. "I must give vent to my feelings ere I can be calm. I will do something to cause you anxiety. Run around the Salto ramparts, or go out on the sea when the storm is raging most violently. If I were fished out a corpse, you would perhaps be a little sorry for Andy, and think she loved you well enough not to be able to live without you."

A child, a wilful, spoiled child, who ought to have been locked up in a dark room to be brought to reason.

"You will not expect me to take these threats for earnest," he answered calmly. "It seems to me far worse that you have come here. If any one had seen you enter my room——"

"I don't care in the least—not in the least," she impetuously replied. "Let every one know that I love you."

"You must go, Andy; your relations might notice your absence."

She dried her tear-wet cheeks with her curls. "Farewell, Walter," she said softly. "I cannot yet understand why we must be strangers to each other."

"You must do so," he replied, pressing his lips lightly

on the dainty fingers; "and it will be no difficult task! In a few weeks you will number me among the dead."

She fixed a strangely earnest gaze upon him. "Perhaps not," she slowly replied. On the threshold she turned. Would he not make some sign to detain her? He bowed with stiff formality; and with a half-angry gesture, she threw open the door, but closed it noiselessly behind her.

CHAPTER XX.

THE gale had increased in violence; under a cloudless sky and a full moon it dashed the waves high against the rocky island. Walter had left the dining-room immediately after the meal was over and retired to his own chamber, where he was engaged in packing his clothes and papers. The two little trunks stood ready strapped; early the next morning he would go to Sorrento, and from thence, by way of Naples, to the Sabine mountains. William Schulze had praised Genazzano; it was said to be cool and shady. Even if Andy left Capri, the place would be distasteful to him. He longed for new impressions, new surroundings, strange faces.

The little baroness had been extremely animated at dinner; he scarcely remembered ever having seen the charming face so mobile; her cheeks glowed and her eyes sparkled, the silvery mocking laugh often reached his ear. She maintained a witty conversation with Schulze and Herr Von Linden, principally it seemed to him, at the latter's expense. He had greeted the old

general and exchanged a few words with the young widow, then under the pretext of having important letters to write, he had left the party and told Pietro, the *cameriere*, to bring up his coffee. Lamp in hand, he stepped out upon the loggia to look for some books he had mislaid. How terribly the gale was raging! It closed the glass door with a crash and instantly extinguished the flame, though he protected it with his hand. The impression produced was a most peculiar one: the clear sky, with the full moon shining brightly, and the whistling and howling of the wind, the roar of the waves, whose rolling and dashing upon the shore was distinctly audible. He listened intently—it was probably about ten o'clock in the evening—what a strange concert of tones the powers of nature were producing! He had intended to go down to the Marina and make a bargain with the fishermen, that they might have a boat ready the next morning.

If the storm did not subside, he might be compelled to defer his plan—the men would hardly undertake to make the passage, even if the usual payment were doubled. At any rate, he resolved to speak to the *padrone*, to learn from him what he thought of the weather. If the boats did not go out, the steamer would not come,

and he should be compelled to remain. He frowned angrily—he would go at any cost.

The composure he had maintained in Andy's presence had been difficult enough; all was not calm within, and he could not by a hasty resolution tear her image from his soul. He had done with love, had conquered it—he wished to retain the freedom purchased by such bitter experience.

He returned to his room, buttoned his overcoat, and pressed his gray felt hat firmly on his head, that the wind might not tear it away; as he opened the door leading into the corridor he found himself face to face with Gertrude.

“Fraulein Gertrude!” he exclaimed in surprise.

She had thrown a waterproof cloak around her and drawn the hood over her head.

“I was in the act of knocking at your door,” she said hastily, “do you know that Baroness Von Valmont has disappeared? Herr Schulze and Herr Von Linden are just discussing whether the general ought to be informed; they do not like to alarm the old gentleman unnecessarily——”

“Andy disappeared!” repeated Walter, whose blood seemed to freeze in his veins.

“We think—but come, Herr Professor, the gentlemen are waiting for us downstairs; we will go to the Marina; perhaps we shall yet find her and can detain her by force.”

Walter turned the key in his door and followed the artist's hasty step.

“After you left the dining-room,” she began, “an eager conversation commenced—so Herr Schulze told me, for I had gone away—but I must give him credit for having acted very prudently and sensibly. The subject was the difference between the courage of men and women; the gentlemen asserted that the latter's bravery was either despair or ignorance of danger, it rarely arose from calm deliberation; it was either an abnormal, feverish condition, or childish carelessness. The baroness would not admit this, she declared that she could vie with any man in maintaining her coolness in the midst of peril, it was merely the arrogance of the stronger sex that made them claim this quality for themselves alone. A discussion ensued about various cases, in which passive and active courage may be developed, and among others Baroness Von Valmont asked: whether it would require courage to row around the island in a small boat on a stormy sea? Herr Schulze replied, that that would be a venture bordering upon madness and one which, though

he considered himself by no means a timid man, he would not undertake ; the sea at Capri was not to be trifled with, especially when the wind blew from this direction, the waves then fairly raged and a boat would be crushed in the twinkling of an eye. The other artists confirmed his words, and said that no one would feel disposed to take such a trip. Herr Von Linden remarked, that the men who rowed him from Massa had said that the gale would reach its height towards midnight, and even the steamers running from Sicily might expect a bad night if they did not take refuge in some harbor. This closed the conversation, the baroness laughed rather scornfully and soon afterwards—about seven o'clock—retired. About fifteen minutes ago, little Marietta rushed into my room in great excitement and asked if I knew that the *bella signora* was just going out on the sea to Massa ; the fishermen had all refused, but Giacinta and her brother were unfastening their boat. The baroness had promised Giacinta a hundred francs, and said she must show that she had more strength, skill and confidence, than the men who were afraid of the sea. I could not believe this mad story, and thought the child had exaggerated the real state of affairs. To gain some certainty, I went up to the baroness's

room and there, to my terror, found no one but the maid, who in reply to my question said anxiously : ‘ Madame is not in, as soon as she came upstairs she threw on her thick white burnous, in order—as she said—to go with the gentlemen to a cliff which commanded a view of the sea——’ I knew that this was not the case, for the gentlemen were sitting quietly in the dining room, smoking their cigars. So Marietta had spoken the truth, and the baroness had really executed this caprice, of which I have no words to express my opinion. I relied only on the good sense of the fishermen, who would prevent Giacinta from going out. As I stood irresolute, considering what was to be done, Herr Schulze came towards me ; his long residence on the island has given him a thorough knowledge of the people, and I therefore told him the important news. He became very grave and begged me to inform you, while he called Herr Von Linden ; all unnecessary uproar must be avoided as far as possible. Do you think such an act on the part of the baroness probable ?”

“ Yes,” replied Erichsen gloomily, “ and the more obstacles have been thrown in her way, the more obstinately she will persist—especially in her present mood.”

Gertrude did not ask the cause of this mood, she sus-

pected something had occurred between the two, which must remain a secret to others.

Meantime they had overtaken Schulze and Von Linden, who had gone out before them. The gale was still raging with the same violence; the wind whistled and hissed as if there were a thousand demons in the air, while the sky remained cloudless and the moon shone peacefully. Gertrude's hood was torn from her head; her cheeks were flushed with the effort to struggle on against the wind. Erichsen had offered his arm, which she declined; it was impossible to think of talking with any hope of being understood.

"Don't be obstinate," shouted William Schulze in her ear; he drew her hood over her head, fastened it with a safety pin, and, without waiting for her consent, drew her hand through his arm and supported her steps. She yielded to his energetic manner without resistance; the sarcastic smile, that often offended her, had vanished from his mobile countenance, and an earnest gravity usurped its place.

As a bend in the road offered them some protection against the wind, the silence was broken.

"This surpasses all the baroness has ever done," groaned Von Linden, who was bathed in perspiration;

“her grandparents—the count, who is hourly expected—I dare not think of it!”

“Is she lost, hopelessly lost, if she has gone out on the sea?” asked Walter, turning to the artist.

“Giacinta’s boat is a nutshell,” he replied; “my only hope is that they have already put back into the harbor. A little fright can do the baroness no harm,” he added sharply; “it will teach her not to play with other people’s lives. Who will provide for Giacinta’s old mother, if any misfortune happens? These bewitching aristocrats are the same in all ages; they no longer thrust pins into the breasts of their slaves, as the Roman ladies did, but they possess the same cruel egotism.”

Gertrude was surprised at this remark, which she had not expected to hear from his lips. Schulze seemed to guess her thoughts, for he bent towards her and whispered:

“Don’t think me harsh and unfeeling, but this magnificent selfishness enrages me, although it is concealed under a most charming exterior. I should never have dreamed of falling seriously in love with this Circe, and I hope others will be radically cured of the folly.”

The most contradictory emotions were struggling in Walter’s soul; he would have liked to load Andy with

the keenest reproaches, tell her the bitterest truths—yet when he imagined the danger to which she was exposed, fancied the nixie with the golden hair, the elf with the dainty little feet, suffocated by the cold embrace of the waves, he forgot everything in the longing to see her before him in safety.

A dense throng of men, women and children stood on the Marina; their shrill voices rose above the roar of the waves, which rolled like huge serpents upon the white strand and furiously dashed their spray high in the air. Little Marietta ran to meet Gertrude.

“*Sono partite*,” she sobbed; “nobody will see them again; even the Holy Virgin cannot help in such a storm! The hundred francs bewitched Giacinta—it is a large sum, but I would not have been able to earn it.”

The gentlemen consulted the fishermen, and Schulze asked them to man a stout boat to go to the assistance of the unfortunate party. The padrone shook his head.

“It is useless,” said he; “we should only be thrown back on the shore again. Why sacrifice more human lives? Three are enough.”

“Offer them as much money as they want,” cried Von Linden piteously—he had seated himself on a stone, and drew his feet up to his nose every time a wave came dashing in—“the Italians will do anything for money.”

"There they are!" shrieked Marietta, who had climbed upon a beam like a cat.

"Where? where?" shouted men and women in a single breath.

"I see the boat on the crest of a wave."

Walter and Schulze also distinguished a dark spot on the shining surface, which instantly disappeared. The people crossed themselves.

"They have gone! May the saints be merciful."

Lights gleamed from all the houses on the Marina; no one thought of sleeping. Some of the women knelt in prayer, others surrounded Giacinta's mother, who gazed stolidly into vacancy and from time to time called for Oreste, her son, whom his sister had taken with her because he was a stout rower. An anxious hour elapsed. Erichsen and Schulze stood at the outer edge of the landing, clinging to the railing; there was not a dry thread of clothing on them, the waves had drenched them to the very skin. The former's face expressed an eager question, as the artist drew out his watch to see how much time had already passed.

"It is chance, predestination if you choose," he replied; "here nothing can help except fate. The nutshell may perhaps dance from the crest of one wave to the

hollow of another, while ships are completely shattered. I am sure that they will be hurled on the strand not far from us; the desire to go to Massa will have long since passed away, and Giacinta will undoubtedly put forth all her strength to gain the shore. As soon as they come in sight, the people will neglect nothing to secure their safety. The old padrone is a thoughtful man; hooks and ropes are ready to pull them to the land, and if matters come to extremity the fishermen will shrink neither from a wet bath nor broken limbs. Fraulein Stade is doing the only sensible thing—soothing the howling women—and has even succeeded in getting them to put the *bambini* to bed, instead of letting them catch cold out of doors.”

The storm seemed to pause, in order to collect strength for a fresh outburst; heavy clouds now obscured the sky and cast their shadows on the heaving sea. Erichsen’s falcon eyes were fixed on the huge waves, which reared their crests like wild steeds. Suddenly he grasped his companion’s arm—“There! am I mistaken?—It is the boat!”

The artist uttered a loud shout.

“It is! There they go gliding down a wave as if it were a railroad—*Dio mio!* Another is rushing over

them—no, they appear again! Giacinta is a brave girl—she rows like the deuce!”

The people on the shore, who had been joined by some strangers from the nearest hotel, raised a piercing shriek. Every one was instantly in motion. Gertrude had ordered a fire to be lighted in the padrone's house, around which the wraps, shawls and clothes brought by Cécile were spread. The light of the flames gleamed through the open door far out into the night.

“*Ma pauvre jeune dame!*” sobbed the Frenchwoman, “how shall I find her—who knows whether she is still alive!” And she held the shawls before the fire on her outstretched arms.

A tall Englishman tapped Herr Von Linden on the shoulder with his field-glass.

“Can that lady swim?” he asked.

“Perhaps so,” replied the latter, sighing.

“Oh! I beg your pardon,” said the other, turning his glass towards the sea.

“*Coraggio, coraggio!*” shouted the crowd in one breath. Giacinta and her brother were rowing with iron strength; they were constantly hurled back, but gradually approached. Several fishermen, who had fastened themselves together by means of a rope wound around

their waists, and whose end was fastened on shore, now rushed into the waves to throw a rope to the nutshell. After several fruitless efforts, which the spectators watched with feverish suspense, the manœuvre succeeded. Giacinta caught the rope and fastened the hook attached to it to the boat. The work that now remained was comparatively easy. When the keel grated on the gravel, the islanders were half frantic with joy.

Walter and William Schulze, wading up to their knees in water, were the first to reach the spot. Andy was lying in the bottom of the boat, covered with her white cloak.

“She is alive!” said Giacinta, whose hands were torn and bleeding. “That’s what I call a hard piece of work! And Oreste was as brave as the strongest man,” she said proudly, pointing to her brother, who smiled idiotically in her face.

Walter stooped and raised the light figure lying senseless at his feet. Water was dripping from the long golden hair; the cloak and dress were heavy with moisture; the beautiful face was deadly pale—only the delicate lips had not lost their scarlet hue. He carried her in his arms to the house, where Gertrude and the

maid had made all possible preparations for her reception. The Frenchwoman, bursting into tears, kissed the cold hand. "She is alive! Thank God!"

The bright flames flooded the pale features with a crimson glow, and the warmth reanimated the rigid limbs. As Walter gently placed her in a chair, she opened her eyes; at the first gleam of returning consciousness this singular little creature instantly recovered her presence of mind.

"*Ma bonne Cécile*," she said, nodding to the faithful servant, and smiling at the gentlemen, who were about to withdraw. "Have I shown courage? If it had not been for the water, which chilled my limbs, I should have held out bravely to the last. Ask Giacinta if I trembled for a moment. I tried to relieve her in rowing, but my hands were too weak. It was really an interesting trip, and a magnificent spectacle to see those mountain waves towering above us on every side."

"There you have it!" William Schulze whispered to the professor; "it was an interesting trip! And tomorrow all three may be ill with nervous fever, and the whole population has been in a turmoil on her account. She calls that an interesting trip—the genuine female Nero!"

"I shall be ready in ten minutes," Andy called to the gentlemen; "wait for me, and send Herr Von Linden on before to soothe my grandparents—I didn't think they would hear of my escapade."

"You need not tell us that," replied Walter; "you never think of others, where the gratification of your own whims and caprices is concerned."

"How unamiable!" she said, with a most charming pout, putting out her little feet that Cécile might remove the wet shoes. "'I will make myself disagreeable—that is a proof of true friendship,' is your motto."

Gertrude found her assistance unnecessary, as the maid undressed her mistress; she therefore went to find Giacinta, who was looking sorrowfully at her boat, which had sustained considerable damage.

"Don't grieve over that," she said sternly; "the baroness will pay you two or three times its value. You really deserve no recompense, because, instead of dissuading the lady, who is inexperienced and knows nothing about the sea, you strengthened her in her reckless foolhardiness—merely that you might afterwards boast that you had done what no man would dare— And to take your brother, whom you love, into such danger! See how he is trembling; he may have got his death."

“My poor Oreste!” exclaimed Giacinta, throwing her arm lovingly around the boy; “it is true, he is cold as ice. If my mother had only lighted a fire at home, instead of sitting here groaning and howling.”

Gertrude bade her go home; she would follow immediately with Marietta, bringing hot cloths and blankets, to rub and wrap the lad; if he could be thrown into a violent perspiration, the chill would perhaps leave no bad consequences. Giacinta perceived the good sense of this advice, and, taking her brother by the hand, ran towards her little home, which stood near. . . William Schulze interrupted Gertrude’s charitable employment, by energetically insisting that she needed rest. The baroness was already dressed, and had declared her intention of returning home on foot.

“She will sleep till twelve o’clock to-morrow, and awake perfectly well; while you will be seated at your easel before breakfast.”

So saying, he took her arm and drew her gently away. Andy ran to meet her.

“I must thank you especially,” she said warmly, holding out both hands; “you have arranged everything, and all in the most practical manner. I shall probably always remain in your debt, since you are too proud to accept favors from others.”

She put her hand through Gertrude's arm and walked on with her, followed by Walter, Schulze and Cécile. The storm had partially subsided, and as the wind was on their backs, they did not find the ascent difficult.

"Your mad escapade has had one good result, madame," said Gertrude gravely. "Giacinta told me, that when she realized the full extent of the danger, she made a vow to the *Madonna del soccorso*, that she would give up all thoughts of vengeance on the faithless Paolo, if she would graciously protect her."

"I hope she will keep the vow," laughed Andy. "I shall expect to find her married when I return next year; I will provide for the dowry—that is the least I can do."

On reaching the albergo, the little baroness said with a sigh of comic despair: "Your universal displeasure weighs heavily upon me; I feel like a criminal. Professor Erichsen looks as Brutus may have done when he condemned his sons; even Herr Schulze's face shows unusual lines. I believe Fraulein Gertrude is my mildest judge!" She threw her arms around her neck and kissed her; then extending her hand to the gentlemen, exclaimed in a tone between laughing and weeping: "Pray forgive me, or I can't sleep. I shall now be able to enter into the situation as a mermaid," she continued,

turning to the tall artist; "I have become familiar with my element. Farewell till we meet again—Walter!" she murmured softly, casting a timid, loving glance at him.

His fingers closed more firmly around the little white hand, as he faltered a somewhat incoherent farewell, then he saw her rush into the arms of the old general, who had been anxiously expecting her arrival.

"I am not drowned, grandpapa, although I perhaps deserved to be! To be sure, I swallowed a great deal of salt water, but only my bracelet and mother-of-pearl comb have fallen into the sea." She threw back her hood, and the damp golden hair fell like a cloak around the dainty figure—nixie, siren, Puck, everything—except a true woman.

CHAPTER XXI.

ABOUT a year and a half had elapsed since the events related in the last chapter. Professor Walter Erichsen, who had been on the rocky cliffs of Capri, glancing from the pages of Tacitus and Juvenal to the Siren Islands and Sorrentine cliffs, while the blue Mediterranean rolled its waves at his feet, sat in a comfortable study, working industriously at a writing-table. The pen could scarcely follow his thoughts, yet it travelled far more swiftly over the paper than in the old days on the Punta di Mitromania. The solid walls of the Herr Professor's study shut out the mischievous sprites, who at Capri had flown through the air on the sunbeams or sailed over the sea on the waves, to whisper all sorts of follies into his ear.

Once more, as on that long past afternoon, he heard the rustle of a dress, but did not spring impatiently to his feet, for he knew it was his dear old mother who moved through the room, and a voice that had probably never possessed the silvery tones of an elf's laugh, fell upon his ear.

"A gentleman would like to see you, Walter; a travelling acquaintance from Italy. You do not like to be disturbed at this hour—but in this case—he is going away to-morrow."

"William Schulze!" said Erichsen. "He is very welcome—I shall be delighted to see him."

He hurried into the adjoining room, where Schulze was standing scanning with the freedom of an old friend, the furniture of the apartment, and the engravings hanging on the walls.

"Remarkably neat and comfortable," said he, after shaking hands with Walter; "it only lacks a souvenir of Italy, a genre picture with characteristic figures. Gertrude will undertake to supply the deficiency—ah! yes, you know nothing about it," he cried, interrupting himself with a grin of delight; "we are to be married next month and journey across the Alps to Rome together."

Walter warmly congratulated his guest, and led him to his study, while the old lady disappeared to make the necessary preparations for dinner.

"Gertrude sends her kindest regards," continued Schulze, drawing from his pocket-book two photographs, which he placed side by side on the table. "That is the

way she looked a year ago, and this is the way she looks now! What do you think of her? Isn't she a beauty? Am I not a good physician for the soul? She has grown ten years younger, her face is rounder, she has a fresh color, dresses well. I don't allow her to buy a dress without consulting my taste. She has grown gay and animated. In short, Professor, I assure you that I am making an excellent match. Many will envy me my wife.

"And how long have you been so happy?" asked Erichsen, smiling.

"It is really only four weeks since Gertrude gave her consent. I would not urge her. I wanted to give her time to forget certain memories. That she has done so, is proved by the message she sent you by me, and this book"—he drew two bound volumes from his coat-pocket—"which I am taking her as a present, and in which I will beg you to write a few words; they will give her sincere pleasure."

The books were: *Latin Studies*, the product of Walter's Italian journey, which he had published not long before.

"Now I will tell you, in a few words, what occurred at Capri after your departure. After we, Gertrude and I, had accompanied you to the Marina and waved you a

last farewell—your boat tossed wildly on the rough sea—we quietly returned to the house. I am really a man of feeling, though I don't carry it around in my vest-pocket; so I could imagine what was transpiring in Gertrude's soul. I began my cure at that very moment, spoke of you in the most unconscious manner, praised your character, expressed my appreciation of it, admired your writings, offered to procure some of them for her, but all with the most perfect unconcern. This did the poor girl good; I perceived it; she endured my presence because I reminded her of the absent—and gradually—but of that later—— At first the little baroness would not believe you had gone away. When she could no longer doubt the fact, the sun of her amiability disappeared behind thick clouds. She assumed the airs of a great lady, and troubled herself very little about us; she bought a picture of Endymion and myself, and by so doing, considered all relations closed. A few days after a party of her fashionable acquaintances arrived, among them a tall, handsome officer—the baroness's betrothed husband. He seemed to be very much in love with his charming fiancée, and she treated him very coldly. I remember one glance she gave him, when he was a little longer than necessary in putting on her shawl, from

which he actually shrank—that tall man before the tiny creature—it was laughable! But ever since Jupiter presented himself to Danaë in the guise of a shower of gold, brilliant jewels have played an important part in all love affairs. The count displayed remarkably good taste in the selection of his valuable gifts. This was certainly something, and the siren softened a little. They soon went to Rome, where they were married in the chapel of the embassy. After the wedding, the count probably adopted another tone; he did not seem formed for languishing.

“Our colony of German artists soon scattered. Endymion offered himself to Fraulein Stösser, and that amiable lady, whose happiness was very touching, went home under her betrothed bridegroom’s escort to attend to her property. Among the many good deeds of which I am conscious, and for which I shall some day be called to account before the Heavenly Judge, none afford me such sincere satisfaction as making this match. He has become a household despot, his days pass in perfect comfort, his wife waits upon him with unwearied devotion, and admires each new moonlight picture as if it were the first. She now writes nothing but bills of fare, but how exquisite they are! Uncle Bräsigg sullenly

yielded the field to me; he had no chance with Gertrude, who required rather more pepper and salt than his kindly nature could bestow. He bored her, and therefore preferred to transplant his umbrella to another region.

“I remained undisputed master of the situation, and used my good fortune with great moderation. Wait! was my watchword—so I waited, and merely took the liberty of offering the young lady my modest advice in business matters. The art-dealers cheated her shamefully. The result of my intervention afforded her a pleasant surprise, and she began to give me her confidence. When she left Capri, we parted as good friends, but she did not think of giving my feelings any other signification than good-will.

“In the autumn I followed her to Munich, and had no reason to complain of my reception. Her home was as neat and comfortable as I had imagined; she seemed pleased when I called—and for a time I remained satisfied with that. At first my visits were rare, and I usually sought her in her studio, then I took tea with her regularly once a week, and cleverly arranged to meet her elsewhere. The crescendo rose very gradually, that her suspicions might not be aroused. A terrible rain-storm came to my assistance; it burst upon the

city while she was at the theatre. I waited at the door with an umbrella, cloak and overshoes I had obtained from her servant, and when she came out and looked helplessly around, appeared as a good genius. Gertrude valued this little service very highly ; no one had ever before troubled himself about how she got home, she told me almost with tears. So I at last made such progress, that a month ago I had a serious conversation with her, which resulted in her placing her industrious hands in mine. I think we shall suit each other. There you have a condensed review of our history. The desire to see you, sincere as it was, would not of itself have brought me to the capital, the art exhibition was the prominent reason. Gertrude has sent two pictures——”

“ Which I have examined with the most sincere admiration,” Walter interrupted, “ they are among the very best that have been displayed. I can never pass without looking at Giacinta’s superb head.”

Schulze twisted his moustache with a gratified smile. “ Yes, ‘ The Meeting ’ is a clever picture ; there are not many artists who can imitate Gertrude. That is why she ought to set a high price on her work, and as she is too modest, I have taken charge of the matter. The

right to photograph is to be sold, and moreover there are two admirers of the other picture, whose offers I expect to increase by playing them off against each other. These are matters, however, which only interest those immediately concerned. Now I should like to hear how affairs have gone with you. You are looking well, but pale and somewhat wearied. You must take a journey again soon, to gain a little rest. Pay us a visit in Rome next winter; Gertrude will give you a neat room."

"Unfortunately I am not a free artist," replied Walter, who had undoubtedly grown very much older in his appearance; "my students cannot accompany me across the Alps. In three or four years I shall be able to obtain a leave of absence for several months, and then I will certainly come and see you in Rome, if you should still be there. I work a great deal, and lead a very lonely life, seeing only my colleagues, for I have formed no social ties. As you perceive, I have a comfortable home; the only thing for which I often reproach my mother is that she spoils me too much, and takes too little care of herself. So I pass my days between the lecture-room and my study—"

"And in so doing will become an old bachelor!" in-

interrupted William Schulze. "I tell you it is useless; in the long run, a man misses family ties—needs a wife. You must marry. Follow my example—first friendship, then warmer feelings, the same interests, the same relations—an excellent receipt for a peaceful marriage. With a clever wife, who has her own intellectual life, we do not pay too dearly for the loss of our personal freedom."

Walter smiled at the artist's well-meant zeal.

"Perhaps I may follow your counsel at some future day; at present I am so much occupied that I have no time to look for a wife."

"At any rate, you can give me some news of the little baroness, now Countess P. Gertrude would like to hear from her."

"You are applying to the wrong person," replied Erichsen, without the slightest change of countenance; "I have only met her occasionally at the theatre and in the street. I do not frequent the aristocratic society in which she moves." He did not say that she had often endeavored to draw him into her circle, which he had steadily avoided. "All I know of her has been told me by others. When I saw her last, about a week ago, dashing past me in a high carriage, whose horses she was driving herself, she looked pale—her bright color

had disappeared. The birth of a dead child is said to have deeply affected her. 'It did not want to live, because it was afraid I should be a bad mother,' she mournfully exclaimed, 'and perhaps I might have improved!' She has been in delicate health ever since, and the doctors are seriously anxious about her. She will not listen to them; rides, drives and hunts as before; dances all night, and commits a thousand imprudences. Her beauty is unchanged—her pallor gives her a new and touching charm, and her sparkling eyes look unnaturally large in the small face."

"And the count?" asked William Schulze, who thought Walter seemed tolerably well informed.

"The count's intimacy with a certain lady is the talk of the city; he often comes home very much intoxicated, in which condition he behaves like a tyrant, and humbly begs his wife's pardon the next morning." The professor rested his head on his hand as he continued: "Andy's house is the most elegant in the city; she is now at Paris—now at Baden-Baden; no entertainment can take place without her; the most aristocratic *jeunesse dorée* are at her feet—she has what she calls happiness—I only fear she will not enjoy it long."

"I should like to see her," said Schulze, thoughtfully;

“she was a wonderfully bewitching creature, with her nixie eyes! She still hovers before my memory, as she danced the tarantella; how her little feet flew over the shining floor, and her red-gold hair floated around her like a flame!”

Walter nodded gravely. “She is a flame that consumes itself! An elf, who mocks mankind; a bewitching, charming creature, who has no peer on earth!” He passed his hand across his brow. “And now, let us go to dinner; we will drink a glass of wine to the health of your betrothed bride and our memories of Capri!” he said, rising and conducting his friend to the dining-room.

THE END.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES

OF NEW APPROVED NOVELS.

Each large 12mo, printed on first quality paper, in large clear type (easily readable, where the ordinary double-column, unleaded 8vo. is too great a strain on the eyes), and bound in light lead-colored, smooth English cloth, flexible, with ornamental black stampings.

Price, per Volume, - - - - - \$1.25.

I.

CHARLOTTE ACKERMAN. From the German of OTTO MÜLLER, by Mrs. CHAPMAN COLEMAN and her daughters, the translators of the "Mühlbach" Novels.

"Carefully written, well digested, and exhibits great merit."—*Times*, New Orleans.

"The author of this romance has acquired a solid reputation in Germany, and it is evident from this translation, that it is deserved."—*Daily Record*, San Francisco.

II.

THE SON OF
authoress of
lated by SELMA

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

MADAME SCHWARTZ,
etc., etc. Trans-

* * * The works of
eminent scholars and
than the fact that the
"Madame Schwartz
remarkably pure, fresh
we have a charming le

Chap. 35 Copyright No.

Shelf

ived high praise from
readers could be found
lication.
story from her pen is
elops, until in the end
w Yorker.

THE CROSS
Mm. THEOPHI

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

MILE DE GIRARDIN,

"A book of unusual
than as a collaboration, distinguished by a plot of deep interest, characters drawn with masterly power,
and a style of dazzling brilliancy."—*Saturday Evening Gazette*, Boston.

"It is a successful and even a brilliant work, and will reward perusal as well as awaken curiosity."—*The Tribune*, New York.

IV.

IN THE DAYS OF MY YOUTH. By AMELIA B. EDWARDS, authoress of "Barbara's History," "The Ladder of Life," "Debenham's Vow," etc., etc.

"In this novel we have evidence of study, research and thoughtful analysis of character. As a delineation of Parisian life, it bears the evidence of a truthfulness which gives validity to fiction. It abounds in historical allusions, is delicate in sentiment, sparkles with apt reflections, and in style is at once vivacious and pure."—*Christian at Work*, New York.

"A singularly brilliant novel. We acknowledge somewhat guiltily, that we have wasted some valuable hours which should have been consecrated to more important books, in reading it from beginning to end."—*The Daily Globe*, Boston.

V.

GERDA. By the famous Madame SCHWARTZ, authoress of "Gold and Name," "Guilt and Innocence," etc., etc. Translated from the Swedish by SELMA BORG and MARIE A. BROWN.

"A very fine work, and will well repay those who read it, considered as a mere novel, but a higher interest attaches to it, because its reproduction here in good English, helps Americans to understand the life of Sweden. . . . We seldom have seen a novel that is better calculated to make a favorable impression. The translators have preserved the sense and the spirit, the vigor and the vivacity of the original."—*The Traveller*, Boston.

VI.

VALENTINE, THE COUNTESS. From the German of CARL DETLEF (Miss Clara Bauer), by M. S., translator of "By His Own Might," etc., etc.

"A story of remarkable power. The heroine, a young girl of extraordinary beauty and intellectual charms, meets a lover, a young man who reciprocates and seems worthy of her affections. She is one of the loveliest women in fiction, and the reader's admiration for her is faithful. The general effect of the story is intensely interesting."—*Literary World*, Boston.

"A well told and interesting story of high life in Germany, with a good plot, and well filled with scenes and incidents likely to attract the reader's attention."—*The Globe*, St. Louis.

VII.

NO ALTERNATIVE. By ANNIE THOMAS, authoress of "Dennis Donne," "He Cometh Not, She Said," etc., etc.

"'No Alternative' is a sweet, good and natural book; exciting sympathy for the faulty, undisciplined young heroine, who is both the weakest and strongest character presented. . . . The trials and tribulations of Harty Carlisle will serve to while away pleasantly, and not unprofitably, a warm summer afternoon."—*People's Monthly*, Pittsburgh.

VIII.

THE VICISSITUDES OF BESSIE FAIRFAX. By HOLME LEE, authoress of "Sylvan Holt's Daughter," "Kathie Brand," etc., etc.

"Of the many novels which Miss Harriet Parr has published, since she first made herself known in 1865, as 'Holme Lee,' this is one of the best. It is an unpretentious and charming picture of English life; the heroine, Bessie Fairfax, being the daughter of a country clergyman, an orphan, brought up by her stepfather, who is a general practitioner. There is also a capital description of a French boarding-school at Caen; and the vicissitudes finally end in a happy marriage. It is smooth, bright and pleasing throughout."—*Morning Post*, Boston.

IX.

CHASTE AS ICE, PURE AS SNOW. By MRS. M. C. DESPARD, authoress of "Wandering Fires."

"In construction of plot, delineation of character and dramatic movement, it is quite equal to many of the startling sensational novels of the day. In spirit, style and purpose it is far above them. In a certain refinement of thought and subtle analysis of motive, the author has shown herself quite the equal of some of the more famous of English female novelists. We rate it among the good novels—good in its diction, in its scope and power, in its reflective philosophy, in its idealizations and in its artistic execution."—*Christian at Work*, New York.

X.

GENTIANELLA. By MRS. RANDOLPH.

"The novel is intensely interesting, and from the opening chapter to the end of the volume the reader is held intent."—*The Traveller*, Boston.

XI.

KATERFELTO. By G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE, author of "Kate Coventry," "Holmby House," "The Three Maries," "Digby Grand," etc.

"We are much mistaken if a stirring tale from the pen of Major Whyte-Melville does not meet with success. The animation of the story is sustained throughout, and both the time and place are selected with a view to picturesque romance. Of course, no book of our authors would be complete without sporting incidents, and hunting the wild stag on Exmoor at the end of the last century is a topic which calls forth his powers, and sets the chase and its surroundings on a higher artistic level."—*London Athenæum*.

XII.

OLDBURY. By ANNIE KEARY, authoress of "Janet's Home," etc. A capital English novel.

A story that is pronounced of much merit, quite equalling the author's previous works.

XIII.

AT CAPRI. A STORY OF ITALIAN LIFE. By CARL DETLEF, author of "Valentine, the Countess," etc. A very strong and pleasant novel.

PORTER & COATES, Publishers,
PHILADELPHIA.

STANDARD BOOKS.

Days Near Rome.

By AUGUSTUS J. C. HARE, author of "Walks in Rome," "Memorials of a Quiet Life." With 100 illustrations, principally from the author's own sketches taken on the spot. Crown, 8vo, cloth, 2 vols., \$5.00. 2 vols. bound in one, cloth, red and gold, \$3.50.

"The ground, in many instances, had been almost untrodden, several of the places described are difficult of access, and have never before been visited by foreigners; and, in most cases, published descriptions either do not exist at all, or are so inaccurate and untrustworthy as to be only misleading. A great field for discovery still remains, even within a day's journey of Rome; and if, in opening the way to others I lead them to enjoy half the pleasure I have received from my own researches, I shall be more than rewarded."—[The Preface.]

The Better Self.

ESSAYS FOR HOME LIFE. By J. HAIN FRISWELL, author of "The Gentle Life," etc. Crown 8vo, cloth, extra, black and gold, gilt top or full red edges, \$1.75.

CONTENTS.—Beginning at Home—The Very Young Children—The Girls at Home—The Wife's Mother—Our own Flesh and Blood—Feeling for Others—Friends and No Friends—Advice Gratis—Pride in the Family—Sneers and Ill-nature—Discontent and Grumbling—The Luxury of Woe—Grievances—Delicate Feelings—The Proper Touch—Looking Forward—Good-Nature, Temper and Humor—The Contented Mind—Domestic Economy—Expectancy—On Keeping People Down—Generous Approval—Likes and Dislikes—On Falling Out—Pretension and Sentiment—False Pretences—Peace.

"The first series of 'The Gentle Life' is in a *twenty-first* edition, and we see no reason why 'The Better Self' should not sell equally well."—*London Athenaeum*.

Storms.

THEIR NATURE, CLASSIFICATION AND LAWS. With the means of predicting them, principally from their embodiments, the Clouds. By WILLIAM BLASIUS, formerly Professor of the Natural Sciences in the Lyceum of Hanover. With colored plates, 8 full-page cuts, and 23 figures, diagrams, maps, etc. Crown 8vo, cloth, extra, \$2.50.

This volume is of very great scientific and popular importance, since it gives a very clear exposition and explanation of the phenomena of weather, and has the endorsement of eminent scientists. It is entirely new in theory, and upsets the established ideas of meteorology in many points.

PORTER & COATES, Publishers,
PHILADELPHIA.

JUST ISSUED.

Encyclopedia of Rural Sports.

Comprising Shooting, Hunting, Fishing, Boating, Yachting, Athletics, Cricket, Base-Ball, etc., and the various Rural Games and Amusements of Great Britain and America. By J. H. WALSH, ("Stonehenge,") author of "The Horse in the Stable and the Field," etc., etc. Illustrated with 150 fine engravings. Thick crown 8vo. Cloth, black and gold, \$5.00.

"This splendid volume is the most thorough work on the subject that has yet been written. * * * The first portion of the book is devoted to the best mode of killing wild animals, and this subject treats of shooting, coursing, hunting and fishing. The second portion embraces an account of racing in all its forms, yachting, boating, pedestrianism, and the third describes cricket, foot ball, tennis golf, curling, horsemanship, driving, skating, swimming, and these are followed by sketches of the anatomy and physiology of the horse and dog, and the treatment of these animals in disease. The lovers of such exercises and studies will find this work a *vade mecum*."—*Forest and Stream*, New York.

The Waverley Novels.

By SIR WALTER SCOTT, Bart. Complete in 23 volumes.

FIRESIDE EDITION.—Two steel illustrations and woodcuts in each volume.

Cloth, black and gold, per volume..... \$1 50

Half calf, gilt, marbled edges, per volume..... 3 00

This is the best and most complete edition for the library or for general use published. Its convenient size, the extreme legibility of the type, which is larger than is used in any other edition, either English or American, its spirited illustrations, quality of the paper and binding, the general execution of the press work, and the low prices at which it is sold, must commend it at once to every one.

ANY VOLUME SOLD SEPARATELY.

The Iliad of Homer.

Rendered into English Blank verse by EDWARD, EARL OF DERBY. From the latest London edition, with all the latest revisions and corrections. With a Biographical Sketch of Lord Derby, by R. SHELTON MACKENZIE, D.C.L., LL.D. Two volumes, crown 8vo, on laid and tinted paper, gilt top, beveled boards, cloth, extra, \$4.00.

The London Times says:—"It must be considered a splendid performance; and we have no hesitation in saying that it is by far the best representation of Homer's Iliad in the English language."

The Edinburgh Review says:—"It is eminently attractive; it is instinct with life; it may be read with fervent interest; it is immeasurably nearer than Pope's to the text of the original. . . . It will not only be read, but read over again and again. . . . Lord Derby has given to England a version far more closely allied to the original, and superior to any that has yet been attempted in the blank verse of our language."

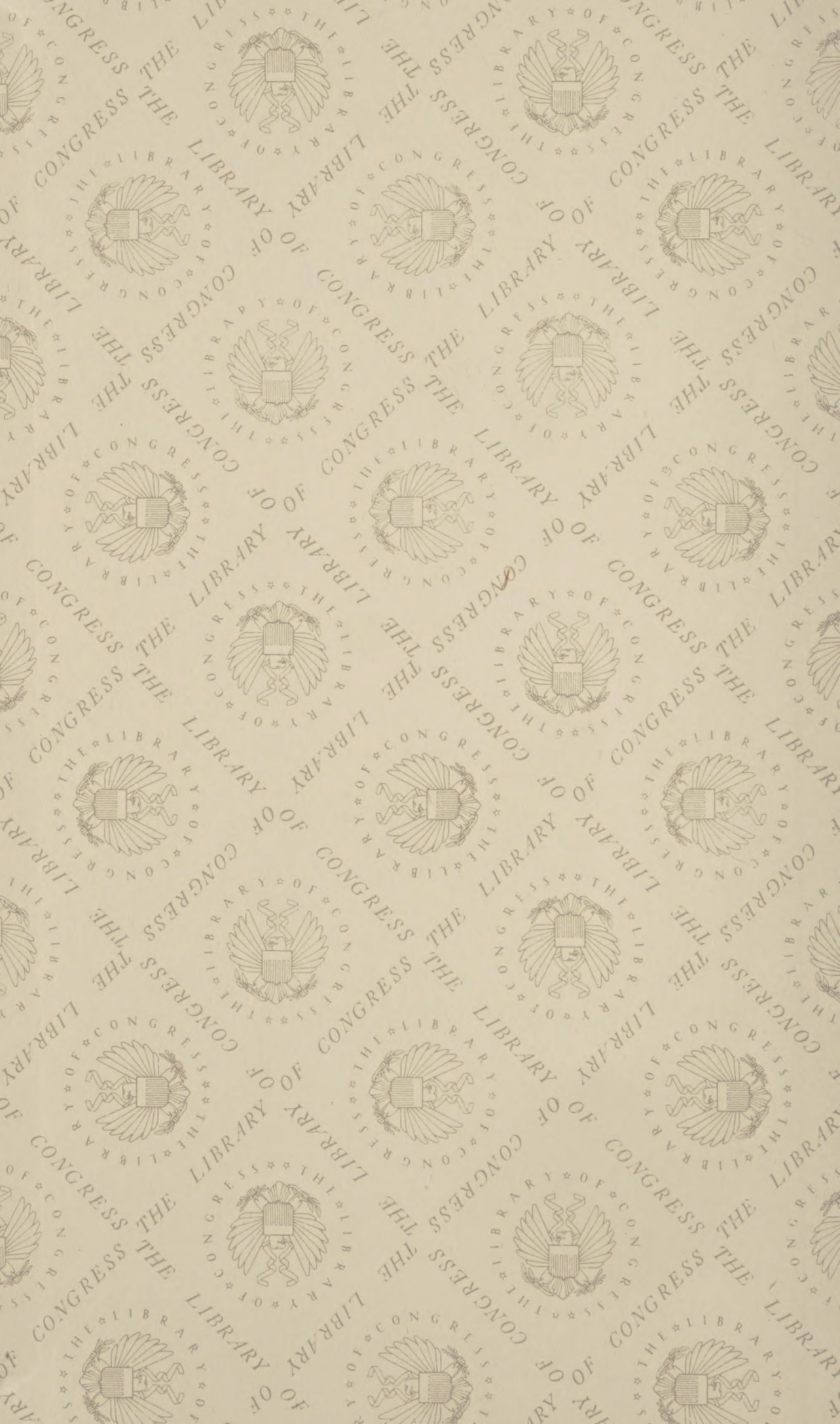
PORTER & COATES, Publishers,

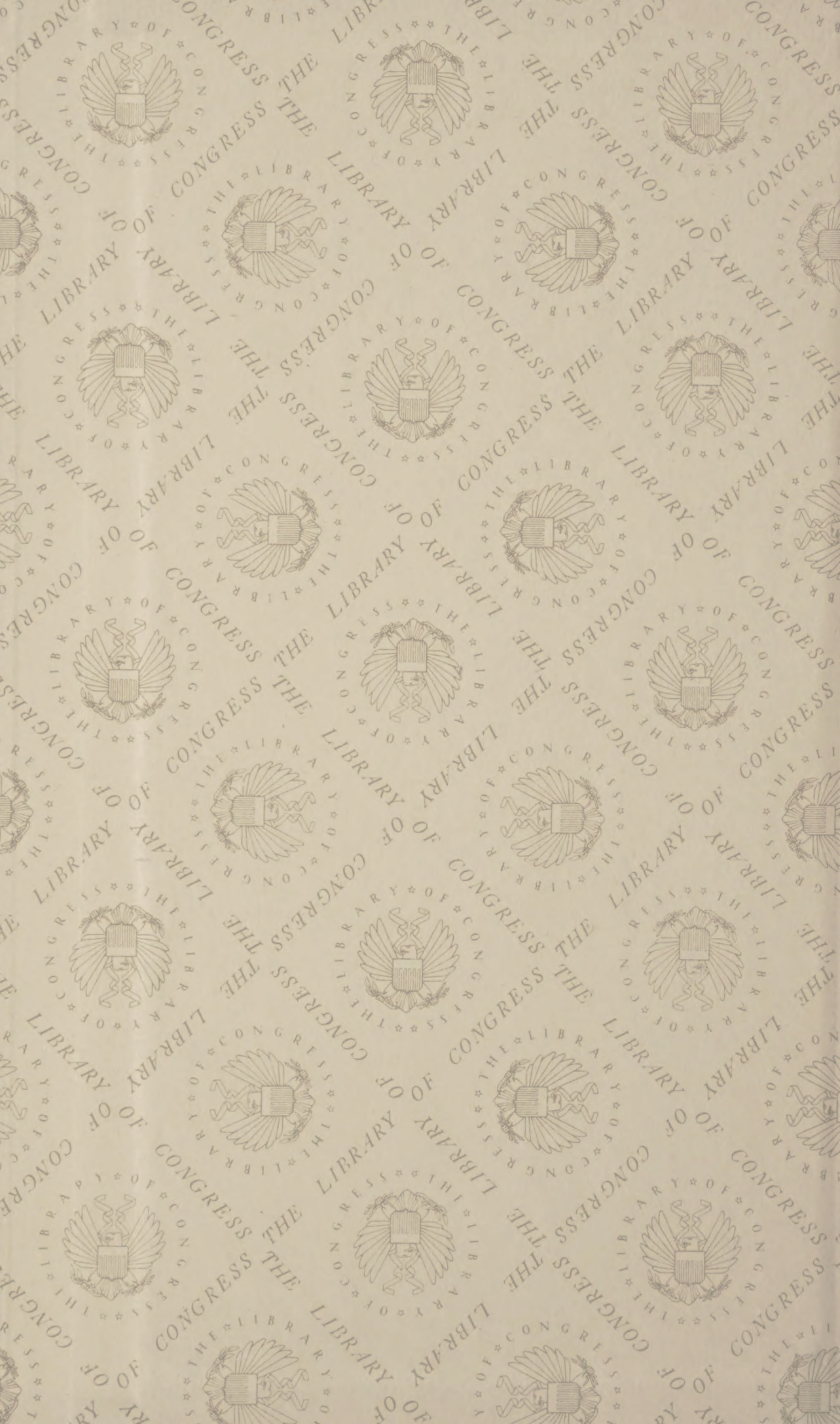
PHILADELPHIA.

L. A. S.

718

718





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00012762641

